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SERMONS

AGAINST

POPERY,

PREACHED AT

SALTERS-HALL,

In the YEAR 1735.

By Several MINISTERS.

In TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

Printed for JOHN NOON, THOMAS COX, RICHARD FORD, RICHARD HETT, and JOHN GRAY.

M DCC XXXV.

A

DISSERTATION

ON

2 THESS. II. 1, ----- 12:

In which 'tis ſhewn that the

Biſhop of *ROME*

IS THE

MAN *of* SIN.

That the whole *Propheſy*, in that Chapter, is applicable to him and his Adherents, and to them alone.

Nor can we, at this Day, deſcribe the *Apoſtaſy* of the *Church* of *Rome*, in a more conciſe and lively Manner, than the APOSTLE has done in that ſhort and remarkable Propheſy.

By the AUTHOR of a PARAPHRASE and NOTES on the Epiſtles of St. *PAUL* to *Philemon*, 1ſt *Theſſalonians*, 2d *Theſſalonians*, 1ſt *Timothy*, *Titus*, 2d *Timothy*. Attempted in Imitation of Mr. *Locke*'s Manner.

The *SECOND EDITION.*

LONDON:

Printed for J. NOON, at the *White-Hart* in *Cheapſide*; T. COX, at the *Lamb* under the *Royal-Exchange*; R. FORD, and R. HETT, in the *Poultry*. [Price Six-pence.]

ADVERTISEMENT

Concerning this

SECOND EDITION.

AS *this Diſſertation* has been printed in Quarto, and is not to be had without buying the *Paraphraſes and Notes, on ſix of* St. PAUL's *Epiſtles, in Imitation of Mr.* Locke's *Manner*; --- the *Author* has been prevailed upon, by the Requeſt of ſome of his

 Friends,

Friends, to print *this Edition*, ſeparate; for the Uſe of ſuch as may chuſe to have this ſmall Piece by it ſelf.

A

DISSERTATION

Concerning the

Man *of* SIN, *&c.*

2 THESS. II. 1-----12.

Now we beſeech you, brethren, by 1.
the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,
and by our gathering together unto
him, that ye be not ſoon ſhaken 2.
in mind, or be troubled, neither by
ſpirit, nor by word, nor by letter,
as from us, as that the day of
Chriſt *is at hand.*
Let no man deceive you by any 3.
means: for that day ſhall not come,

except

except there come a falling away firſt, and that man of ſin be revealed, the
4. *ſon of perdition: Who oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf above all that is called* God, *or that is worſhipped; ſo that he as* God *ſitteth in the temple of* God, *ſhewing himſelf that he is* God.
5. *Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you theſe*
6. *things? And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be re-*
7. *vealed in his time. For the myſtery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth,* will let, *until he*
8. *be taken out of the way. And then ſhall that wicked* one *be revealed, (whom the* Lord *ſhall conſume with the ſpirit of his mouth, and ſhall deſtroy with the brightneſs of his coming:*
9. Even him) *whoſe coming is after the working of* Satan, *with all power,*
10. *and ſigns, and lying wonders; and with all deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs, in them that periſh; becauſe they received not the love of the truth,*

that

that they might be ſaved. And for 11.
this cauſe God *ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſion, that they ſhould believe a lie: That they all might* 12.
be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs.

OPERY, however artfully diſguiſed in *Proteſtant Countries*, and where there is Liberty for free Inquiry, continues ſtill to be a moſt corrupt and tyrannical *Religion*, in Places where 'tis eſtabliſhed and protected by the Sword of the *Magiſtrate*.

As the APOSTLES had the *prophetic Spirit* in the higheſt Degree, and *Popery* is ſuch a notorious Corruption of *Chriſtianity*, a Corruption which has ſpread ſo far and wide, and continued ſo long in the World; one would naturally expect to find Predictions, in their *Writings*, concerning *this grand Apoſtaſy*, to prevent the true *Chriſtians* of later Ages from being ſhocked at the Appearance of ſo diſagreeable a State of Things. Such a *Propheſy*, as I apprehend, is contained in this *Chapter*, v. 1,—— 12.

St. PAUL planted the *Chriſtian Church* at *Theſſalonica*. After he had left that Place, the *Chriſtians* fell into a Miſtake, concerning the Coming of *the day of the* LORD, imagining

gining that St. PAUL thought it to be juſt at Hand. To rectify that Miſtake (which he ſuſpected had been occaſioned, either by his Diſcourſes, when he was among them, or by a *Letter*, which he had wrote ſince;--- to rectify that Miſtake, I ſay) he ſent this *ſecond Epiſtle*, in which he acquaints them that *that Day* could not be ſo near; becauſe a great and remarkable *Apoſtaſy* was firſt to happen in the *Chriſtian Church*.

That *the day of* CHRIST, v. 2. doth not refer to *our* LORD's coming to deſtroy *Jeruſalem* and the *Jewiſh Nation*, will plainly appear, if we look into the Riſe and Progreſs of this Miſtake. In the *former Epiſtle*, Chap. iv. 13, *&c.* the APOSTLE diſſuaded the *Theſſalonians* from an exceſſive Sorrow, upon the Death of their Friends; ſuch as the *Heathens* were commonly guilty of; putting them in mind of the *Chriſtian* Promiſe of a glorious Reſurrection to eternal Life. When that Reſurrection and compleat Happineſs will commence, he there informs them, *viz.* at the Coming of the LORD, when the *Chriſtians*, who ſhall be then found alive upon the Earth, ſhall be transformed; as well as the Dead be raiſed, and the Righteous all made happy. Having mentioned *that Coming of the* LORD, or of *the Day of the* LORD, he, in the Beginning of the 5th Chapter, goes on with his Diſcourſe about *that day*; aſſuring them that it would come ſuddenly and ſurprizingly, and that (as the particular Time

was

was unknown) Men ſhould always be prepared; but he ſaid nothing there, how nigh, or how diſtant, he apprehended it to be; and (very probably) from that his Silence aroſe the Miſtake of the *Chriſtians* at *Theſſalonica*.

As ſoon as the APOSTLE underſtood that they had miſtaken his Meaning, he wrote to 'em this *ſecond Letter*; the principal Deſign of which was to ſet them right about this Point. And he ſeems to have been very ſollicitous to ſet them right in this Particular; leſt they ſhou'd have been tempted to have thrown off *Chriſtianity it ſelf*; when they ſhould find that the Event did not happen, according to their Expectations. When he was among them, he had told them that *a grand Apoſtaſy* was to happen; and therefore *the Day of the* LORD was at ſome Diſtance. That *Propheſy* he now repeats, and intimates to them that it was a plain Proof of the Diſtance of *that great Day*. If therefore *the Day*, or *coming of the* LORD, 1 Theſſ. iv. 15, *&c.* and v. 1, *&c.* ought to be underſtood of *the Day of Judgment*, when CHRIST ſhall deſcend, the Dead ſhall be raiſed, and the *Generation* then living transformed; as it certainly ought to be: I think it evident, that it ought [a] ſo to be underſtood in this Place alſo; for of *the ſame Day*, and the *ſame coming of the* LORD, he appears to be ſpeaking

[a] St. *Auſt.* de Civit. Dei, L. xx. c. 19.

in both the *Epiſtles*. And, what may further confirm this, is, that by *that day* [a], or *the coming of the* LORD, is generally meant his coming to judge the World. As, therefore, this is the uſual Meaning of the Phraſe, in [a] other Places of the *New Teſtament*, and the moſt evident Meaning of it in theſe two *Epiſtles* to the *Theſſalonians*; we have no Occaſion (upon that Account) to look for *the Man of Sin*, and the *grand Apoſtaſy*, before the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*; as they are obliged to do, who underſtand *this coming of the* LORD to refer to the Deſtruction of that City.

None of the ſeven following Interpretations of *this Propheſy* appear to me to be well grounded.

(1.) *Grotius* would perſuade us that *Caius Caligula* was *the Man of Sin*, here *propheſied* of. Whereas, according to the Account of all the lateſt and beſt *Chronologers*, this *Epiſtle* was written about twelve Years after the Death of that *Emperor*. It could not, therefore, ſurely be a Propheſy of the Wickedneſs and Cruelty of *Caligula*.

(2.) Dr. *Hammond* would have *Simon Magus* and the *Gnoſtics* to be here deſign'd; but *S. Magus* had already ſhow'd himſelf an Ene-

[a] *See* Matt. xxv. 31. Acts xvii. 37. 1 Cor. i. 8. and iii. 13. and v. 5. and xv. 23. 2 Cor. i. 14. Eph. iv. 30. *compared with* Rom. viii. 23. Philip. i. 6; 10. and ii. 16. 1 Theſ. ii. 19. and iii. 13. and v. 23. 2 Theſ. i. 10. 2 Tim. i. 12; 18. and iv. 8. 2 Pet. i. 19. and ii. 9. and iii. 4,——10; 12. 1 John iv. 17. Jud. ver. 14. and many other Places, where Phraſes of the ſame Import are made uſe of, as 1 Pet. i. 7; 13, *&c.*

my

my to *Chriſtianity* at *Samaria*; and therefore was not *yet to be revealed.* And as to his Conflict with St. PETER at *Rome*, and many of the Doctor's Stories about the *Gnoſtics*, they ſeem to be built upon too ſandy a Foundation, to deſerve any great Regard. Dr. *Whitby* and Mr. *Le-Clerc* have abundantly confuted that Interpretation.

Grotius's introducing *Simon Magus*, Ver. 8, 9. is as groundleſs, for the APOSTLE doth there evidently continue to ſpeak of the ſame Perſon, that he had began with, Ver. 3, 4. and if *Grotius* ſaw that the *whole Propheſy* could not agree either to *Caligula*, or to *Simon Magus* and his deluded Followers, I think he ought, in his Interpretation, to have have referred no Part of it to either of them.

(3.) [a] Others would have the *unbelieving Jews*, who perſecuted the *Chriſtians* before the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and made many of them *apoſtatize* to *Judaiſm*, to be *the Man of Sin*, &c. But this Interpretation appears to me to be not well grounded. For the *unbelieving Jews*, tho' they did, indeed, perſecute the *Chriſtians*; yet they were not united under any one eminent Head, or Leader. They were never able to exalt themſelves above all, that is called *a God*, or *an Emperor*, i. e. above all the Kings and Potentates upon Earth. Nor had they, after

[a] *See* Mr. *La-Roche*'s new *Memoirs* of Literature, for *Sept.* 1726.

this Time, any one Perſon among them, *Who ſate in the Temple of* GOD, ſhewing and manifeſting himſelf to be *a God*, or to be poſſeſſed of the Power of a King, or temporal Monarch.

Nor doth St. PAUL appear to me to be by any Means *he that letted*, Ver. 6. 7. for the *unbelieving Jews* perſecuted the *Chriſtians* after his Converſion, as well as before it; nor could he prevent the *Apoſtaſy* of the *Jewiſh Chriſtians* by labouring (as he generally did) among the *Gentile Churches*.

Beſides, in the *Propheſy* of St. PAUL, the *Apoſtaſy* was (in a great Degree, at leaſt,) to precede *the Revelation of the Man of Sin*; whereas, the perſecuting *antichriſtian* Spirit of the *unbelieving Jews* was *revealed*, or manifeſted, before the *Apoſtaſy* of the *Jewiſh Chriſtians*.

And, finally, 'tis a grand Objection with me againſt that Interpretation, that by the *Man of Sin's appearing*, and *being revealed*, is underſtood his *Periſhing* and *Deſtruction*. In as much as St. PAUL hath clearly diſtinguiſhed his Coming, and the Continuance of his Power, from the Puniſhment and Perdition which would be, at laſt, inflicted on him by the LORD.

(4.) " Others, again, would have the *unbe-*
" *lieving Jews*, who revolted from the *Romans*,
" together with the *Jewiſh Converts*, who *apoſ-*
" *tatized* from the *Chriſtians* to the *Jewiſh Re-*
" *ligion*, to be the Perſons here *propheſied* of."

Whereas,

Whereas, what the APOSTLE is here ſpeaking of, was an *Apoſtaſy* from the *true Religion*. For ſo the Word [a] αποστασια ſignifieth in other Places of the *New Teſtament:* And what will lead us to underſtand it ſo, in this Place, is, that it was to be carried on by "ſham Mi-"racles, and all the Deceivableneſs of Un-"righteouſneſs; and ſhould prevail only among "vicious Perſons, who had an Enmity to "Truth, and loved Lies and Wickedneſs." But the *unbelieving Jews* could not *apoſtatize* from the *Chriſtian Religion*; becauſe they had never embraced it; and the *Jewiſh Chriſtians*, who did *apoſtatize*, had no eminent Head or Leader, that deſerved the Name of *the Man of Sin*, &c. Dr. *Whitby*, who is the moſt conſiderable Advocate for this Interpretation, plays between the two; and brings in the *unbelieving Jews* revolting from the *Romans*, or the *Jewiſh Chriſtians* falling away from *Chriſtianity*; juſt as may beſt help him out in his *Hypotheſis*. But the *Propheſy* itſelf is uniform, and deſcribes one Sort of *Apoſtaſy*, quite throughout.

(5.) As *Mahomet* himſelf did never profeſs the *Chriſtian Religion*, he could not be called *an Apoſtate*. However, as he made many *Chriſtians* to *apoſtatize*, and built *his Religion* partly upon the Ruin and Corruption of *Chriſtianity*, he might (in ſome Senſe) be ſaid *to ſit in the Temple of* GOD. He likewiſe (tho' he pretended to be an extraordi-

[a] Acts xxi. 21. 1 Tim. iv. 1. Heb. iii. 12.

nary

nary Prophet) ſhewed himſelf to be in Reality *no Prophet*, but a *temporal Prince*; and he aroſe after the Downfal of the *Roman Empire*. Which I take to have been the (το κατεχον) *that which hindered* the Appearance of *the Man of Sin*. All this may be ſaid in Favour of them who underſtand this as a *Propheſy* of *Mahomet*. But then (1.) Suppoſe that St. JOHN and St. PAUL propheſied of the ſame Thing (as I think they did) 'tis evident that *Rome* muſt be the Seat of *the grand Impoſtor*. For *Rev.* xvii. 9, 18. the City, which ſtood upon ſeven Hills, and then reigned over the Kings of the Earth, was to be the Seat of this *tyrannical Power*. (2.) 'Tis a ſufficient Argument againſt applying *this Propheſy* to *Mahomet*, that this *wicked one* was to come after the Working of *Satan*, with all Power and Signs and lying Wonders, *i. e.* with great Pretenſions to *Miracles*. Whereas *Mahomet* did not pretend to eſtabliſh himſelf and his *Impoſture* by *Miracles*. For, tho' ſeveral *Miracles* are aſcribed to him, by the fabulous and legendary Writers among the *Mahometans*; yet their learned Men renounce them all. [a] Nor doth *Mahomet* himſelf, in the *Koran*, lay any Claim to them.

(6.) Tho' *Rome Heathen* oppoſed *Chriſtianity* very much, and the *Emperors* exalted themſelves above all the Kings and Princes

[a] See Dr. *Prideaux*'s Life of *Mahomet*, p. 31. and Mr. *Sale*'s Tranſlation of *Al Koran*, p. 203, 236, 473.

upon

upon the Earth; yet this their Exaltation was not a Thing then *to be revealed.* Neither did they *apoſtatize* from *Chriſtianity*, nor ſit in the *Temple of* God, nor pretend to eſtabliſh their power by *Miracles.*

(7.) The *Papiſts*, in their *Annotations* on the *Rhemiſh New Teſtament*, interpret this *Apoſtaſy* to be "the falling away of the "*Proteſtants* from the *Church of Rome.*" And ſo (by a ſtrange *Legerdemain)* we are to be the *Man of Sin*, or his Forerunners at leaſt. Whereas, it doth not certainly appear that there was any *Chriſtian Church* at *Rome*, when St. Paul wrote *this ſecond Epiſtle* to the *Theſſalonians.* Nor are we united under any one common Head upon Earth; nor do we pretend to eſtabliſh our Doctrine by *Miracles.* Theſe and many other Things plainly ſhow, that 'tis ridiculous to apply *this Propheſy* to the Reformation from *Popery.*

As we have rejected theſe *Miſinterpretations*, the next Thing is to point out the Apostle's Meaning. And, however difficult it may appear, upon a tranſient Reading, to fix the Senſe of ſo ſhort and general a *Propheſy* as this; I will venture to ſay, that *no Propheſy* could have been more exactly accompliſhed, than this hath been, in the *Biſhop of Rome*, and his Adherents. And therefore, as it agrees to them, and the Whole of it to them only; there is the greateſt Reaſon to think, that it was deſigned for them; eſpecially as it is a ſingular

Event,

Event, the like to which never happened before, and (moſt probably) never will happen again.

But let us go over the ſeveral Parts of *the Propheſy*.

Ver. 3. " Before the Coming of the Day " of the Lord there was to happen *a Falling* " *away*, or *an Apoſtaſy*." And, accordingly, what an *Apoſtaſy* from the true *Chriſtian* Worſhip, Doctrine, and Practice, hath happened; and is ſupported by the Church of *Rome?* Inſtead of worſhiping GOD with Simplicity, and in Spirit and Truth, they have introduced external Pomp and numerous Ceremonies, which ſtrike upon the Senſes and ingage the Atttention without mending the Heart.

Inſtead of worſhiping GOD through JESUS CHRIST (the only Mediator between GOD and Men) they have ſubſtituted the Doctrine of *Dæmons*, *i. e.* the Spirits of Men departed out of this Life, who (as they pretend) intercede [a] with GOD for us; and they invoke the *Virgin Mary* more frequently than GOD himſelf. They have not only ſucceded *Rome Heathen*, in the Seat of *Empire*; but have alſo apoſtatized into their Imagery and Idolatry [b]. Though they have, indeed, diſ-

[a] See the late Popiſh Catechiſm, Chap. 8. Concil. Trident. Seſs. xxv. [b] See the Account given by Dr. *Middleton*, who was himſelf at *Rome*, and had thereby an Opportunity to obſerve the Similitude between the *Religion* of antient and preſent *Rome*. See alſo Sir *Iſaac Newton*'s late Book on the *Propheſies*, &c. p. 204.

guiſed

guiſed it with new Names and different Pretenſions.

Inſtead of the *Chriſtian Doctrine*, they have *apoſtatized* from the Faith, and in many Countries taken from the common People the Liberty of reading the *Scriptures* in their Mother Tongue; that they might, with the more Eaſe, propagate their own Deluſions.

For, having in a forcible and violent Manner, reſtrained the Liberty of private Judgment, they have with leſs Difficulty ſubſtituted, inſtead of the moſt excellent *Doctrine* of the *Goſpel*, their own Articles of Faith, and the forged Traditions and lying Legends of their *Church*. And not content barely to propagate Ignorance, they have dared moſt impudently to commend it, and called it *the Mother of Devotion*.

Their incouraging the *Apoſtaſy* in *Practice*, will be taken Notice of in the Sentences that immediately follow.

THIS GRAND APOSTASY was to proceed gradually to its Height. But when it came to ſuch a Pitch; then was to be revealed one, who ſhould deſervedly be called, *the Man of Sin, and Son of Perdition*.

That this Phraſe may denote a Succeſſion of Perſons one after another, tho' but one at a Time, may appear from *Deut.* xvii. 14----20. where that Phraſe, the *King of Iſrael*, muſt be underſtood, not of one King only, but of a Succeſſion of Kings; and from [a] ſeveral Texts, where the *Jewiſh High-Prieſt* is ſpoken of as one Perſon, tho' any one in that Succeſſion *of High-Prieſts* is thereby intended. And to whom can

[a] Lev. xxi. 10. Numb. xxxv. 25, 28. Joſh. xx. 6. Heb. ix. 7.

the Title of *the Man of Sin* ſo properly belong, as to the Succeſſion of the *Biſhops of Rome*, for many paſt Centuries? There have been among them, not only ſome of the vileſt of Mankind, notorious for their Cruelty, Infidelity, Debauchery, Simony, and all Manner of Wickedneſs. But by their [a] Indulgences, Pardons, and Diſpenſations, [a] which they claim a Power from CHRIST of granting; and which they have ſold in ſo infamous [b] a Manner, they have incouraged all Manner of vile and wicked *Practices*. Inſtead of ſhewing Men the Neceſſity of ſincere Repentance, unfeigned Faith, and an holy Life and Converſation; they have contrived numberleſs Methods to render an holy Life entirely needleſs; —— to indulge Men in the greateſt and moſt abominable Vices, and yet aſſure them of Heaven; even without a thorough Repentance, provided they will ſufficiently pay them for their Admiſſion.

The Form of *Indulgences*, [b] a little before the Reformation, was ſo ample, that rich Men were

[a] See the late Popiſh Catechiſm, c. x. [b] Mr. *Bayle* (in his *Dictionary*, under the Article *Banck*, Laurence) hath given us the Hiſtory of a remarkable Book, called, *The Taxes of the Romiſh Chancery:* In which there is a very particular Account how much Money was to be paid into the *Apoſtolic*, or *Pope*'s Chamber, for almoſt all Sorts of Vices. Ex. gr. " He who had been guilty of " Inceſt with his Mother, Siſter, or other Relation, either in Con- " ſanguinity, or Affinity, is taxed at V. *Gros.* The Abſolution of " him who has defloured a Virgin, VI. *Gros.* * The Abſolution " of him who has murdered his Father, Mother, Siſter, Wife,----- " V. or VII. *Gros.*

" The Abſolution and Pardon of all Acts of *Fornication* com- " mitted by *any of the Clergy*, in what Manner ſoever, whether it " be with a Nun, within or without the Limits of the Nunnery; " or with his Relations in Conſanguinity, or Affinity, or with his " God-Daughter, or with any other Woman whatſoever; and " whether

were unconcerned, what Sins they committed, as knowing that they could, living or dead, purchaſe a Pardon. For ſuppoſe they neglected it in their Life-Time, it was but leaving ſo much Money by Will, at their Death, for Maſſes and

" whether alſo the ſaid Abſolution be given in the Name only of " the *Clergyman* himſelf, or of him jointly with his Whores, with a " Diſpenſation to inable him to take and hold his Orders and eccle- " ſiaſtical Benefices, and with a Clauſe alſo of Inhibition, coſts " 36 *Tournois*, and 9, or 3 *Ducats*.

" And if, beſides the above, he receives Abſolution from Sodo- " my, or Beſtiality, with the Diſpenſation and Clauſe of Inhibi- " tion, as before, he muſt pay 90 *Tournois*, 12 *Ducats*, and 6 " *Carlins*.

" But if he only receives Abſolution from Sodomy, or Beſtiality, " with the Diſpenſation, or Clau e of Inhibition, he pays only " 36 *Tournois*, and 9 *Ducats*. A *Nun*, having committed Fornica- " tion ſeveral Times, within and without the Bounds of the Nun- " nery, ſhall be abſolved, and inabled to hold all the Dignities of " her Order, even that of *Abbeſs*, by paying 36 *Tournois*, and 9 " *Ducats*.

" The Abſolution of him who keeps a Concubine, with Diſ- " penſation to take and hold his Orders, and Eccleſiaſtical Benefi- " ces, coſts 21 *Tournois*, 5 *Ducats*, and 6 *Carlins*."

This is a Tranſlation of the very Words of the *Book* itſelf. Only the firſt Articles to the * are wanting in *one Edition*. However, even theſe Articles alſo, are in the moſt perfect and correct Editions.

This *Book* has been ſeveral Times printed both in *Popiſh* and *Proteſtant* Countries; and the *Proteſtant Princes* inſerted it among the Cauſes of their rejecting the Council of *Trent*. When the *Papiſts* ſaw what Uſe the *Proteſtants* made of it, they put it into the *Liſt of probibited Books*. But then they condemned it only upon the Suppoſition of its having been *corrupted* by (the *Proteſtants*, or) Heretics.

But let them ſuppoſe as much as they pleaſe, that it has been corrupted by Heretics; the Editions of it which have been publiſhed in *Popiſh Countries*, and which the *Papiſts* can't diſown, as that of *Rome*, 1514. That of *Cologn*, 1515. Thoſe of *Paris* 1520, 1545, and 1625. And thoſe of *Venice*, one in the VIth Vol. of the *Oceanus Juris*, publiſhed 1533. the other in the XVth Vol. of the ſame Collection, reprinted 1584. ——— *Theſe Editions*, I ſay, are more than ſufficient to juſtify the Reproaches of the *Proteſtants*, and to cover the *Church of Rome* with Confuſion.

The *Popiſh Controvertiſts*, who have not a Word to ſay againſt the Authority of the Edition of *Rome*, or that of *Paris*, &c. are

under

Indulgences, and they were aſſured that all would be forgiven them. Can ſuch notorious Wickedneſs always eſcape without an eminent Perdition?

How juſtly may *preſent Rome*, for her Perſecution, Idolatry, and notorious Wickedneſs, be deemed [a] *myſtical Babylon*, and be (ſpiritually, or figuratively) called [a] *Sodom* and *Egypt* (where Wickedneſs hath riſen to an amazing Height, and the *People of* GOD have been under a long and cruel Bondage) and the *Mother* [a] *of Fornications and of the Abominations of the Earth?*

V. 4. If rightly tranſlated would (I think) have run thus, "Who oppoſes himſelf, *i. e.* "to CHRIST, and exalts himſelf above every "one that is called a God, or *(even)* the Impe- "rial Dignity, ſo that he, as a God, ſits [b] [in-

under great Perplexity. However, ſince the *Proteſtants* have made ſo great an Handle of this *Book*, the *Papiſts* pretend, that (tho' ſome of the *Popes* have been guilty of ſuch infamous Practices, and ſuffered ſuch Books to appear; —— yet) the *Church of Rome* in general abhors them.

But ſhe has never ſhewn, by the Suppreſſion of theſe *Taxes*, that ſhe has had them in Abhorrence. They have been printed (as has been already obſerv'd) thrice at *Paris*, twice at *Cologn*, and twice at *Venice*. And ſome of theſe *Editions* have been publiſh'd ſince *Claude d'Eſpence*, a *Popiſh Dr.* exclaimed publickly againſt the Enormities of *this Book*.

The *Inquiſition* of *Spain*, and that of *Rome* have condemned *the Book*, only as they ſuppoſe it to have been corrupted by *Heretics*.

I muſt add, in the ſecond Place, that the Suppreſſion of ſuch a Work is not a ſure Sign of diſapproving the Rules it contains. This may only ſignify that they repented of the Publication of it, as it gave ſo fair an Handle for the *Heretics* to reproach the *Court of Rome*, and to wound the *Church of Rome*, thro' the Sides of the *Pope*.

Theſe ought to be eſteemed *Myſteries of State*, *Arcana Imperii*, not fit to be divulged. [a] Rev. xi. 8. and xvii. 5. [b] Καθισαι, ſo the Word ſignifies, Rev. xvii. 15. and xviii. 7. anſwering to יֵשֵׁב Pſalm ix. 4. and xxix 10. and cx. 1. Ezek. xxviii 2. Zech. vi. 13.

"throned]

" throned] in the Temple of GOD, ſhewing " himſelf to be a God." [*Who oppoſes himſelf*] that is, to CHRIST, and true *Chriſtians*. And who have done this more than the *Church of Rome?* Witneſs their infamous *Croiſadoes*, and the cruel Maſſacres of the *Albigenſes* and *Waldenſes*, of whom they are ſaid to have ſlain above [a] 900,000.

In [b] about 30 Years from the firſt founding of the Order of *Jeſuits*, above 800,000 of the *Proteſtants* were put to Death, by the Hand of the Executioner only. Beſides great Numbers who periſhed ſeveral other Ways, of whom we have now no particular Account remaining. The [b] *Duke of Alva* boaſted of his having, in a few Years, cut off 36,000 Proteſtants in the *Netherlands*.

The [c] horrible and infernal Court of *Inquiſition* is ſaid, in about 30 Years, to have [d] conſumed 150,000, by various Kinds of Torments, and ſtill remains in *Spain*, *Portugal*, *Italy*, and other Places; on Purpoſe to hinder all free Inquiry, and to keep Mankind in the greateſt Ignorance of the *true Religion*, and in a moſt ſlaviſh Subjection to an *Hierarchy* of ambitious, lazy, and debauched *Prieſts*.

The cruel Impriſonment, ſcourging, and burning of the *Martyrs* here in *England*, and the horrid and prodigious *Maſſacres* in *France* and *Ireland* can never ſurely be forgot. No

[a] See *Mede*'s Works, p. 503. [b] Ibid. p. 504. [c] Whoever would ſee a faithful and authentic Account of the Riſe, Progreſs, and Laws of the *Inquiſition*; and of the inhumane Treatment that ſuch as differ from the *Church of Rome* there meet with, —— let them read *Limborch's Hiſtory of the Inquiſition*, tranſlated by the *Rev. Mr. Chandler*. [d] See *Mede*'s Works, p. 504.

benevo-

benevolent Perſon can read the Accounts, at this Diſtance of Time, without weeping Eyes and a bleeding Heart.

Perſecution is a diſtinguiſhing Character of *this Apoſtate*. If to *wear* [a] *out the ſaints of the moſt high*, and to ſlay ſuch *as are witneſſes* [b] for Truth, Virtue, and Liberty, and that bear their Teſtimony againſt Impoſitions, Violence and Perſecution; if *to* [c] *make war with the ſaints*, and frequently *to prevail againſt, and overcome them*; and even to *be* [d] *drunk with the blood of the ſaints, and of the martyrs of* JESUS.—— If theſe Things, I ſay, can poſſibly be accompliſhed, they have been, and ſtill are accompliſhed by the cruel and tyrannical *Church of Rome*.

By *every one that is called a God*, muſt be underſtood *earthly Magiſtrates*, or *temporal Princes*; for Θεὸς, without the Article, doth often ſignify *a God*; and here 'tis evidently oppoſed to ὁ Θεὸς, THE GOD, or the *one true* GOD, in whoſe Temple *this Man of Sin* was to ſit. So Pſalm lxxxii. 6, 7. "I have ſaid ye are *gods*, "and all of you are children of the moſt high: "but ye ſhall die like men, and fall like one "of *the princes*." And Verſe 1. of that Pſalm, "GOD ſtandeth in the congregation of the "*mighty*, he judges among the *gods*" [e].

But as Σέβασμα ſeems plainly to be an Alluſion to Σεβαστὸς the *Greek* Name of the *Cæſars*, or *Roman Emperors*; 'tis poſſible that the APOSTLE might, in both the Phraſes, refer to the

[a] Dan. vii. 25. [b] Rev. xi. 7, 8. [c] Ibid. xiii 4—— 7. [d] Ibid. xvii. 6. [e] See alſo Ezek. xxviii. 2, 6, 9. John x. 34, 35. 1 Cor. viii. 5.

Roman

Roman Emperors; who, after their Deaths, were (moſt of them) inroll'd among the *Gods*. Nay, *Caius*, before his Death, laid Claim to Divinity, and would needs be acknowledged and worſhiped as a *God*.

That by the *Temple of* God, where this *Impoſtor* was to fix his Seat, may be underſtood the *Chriſtian Church*, will appear, if it be conſidered that the *Chriſtian Church*, is, in the *New Teſtament*, often called *the Temple of* God, [a] or compared to *the Temple*. And in *this Temple* 'tis propheſied, that *the Man of Sin* would exalt himſelf above all *temporal Magiſtrates*, *Kings*, and *Emperors*. And 'tis very eaſy to point out the Accompliſhment of this Part of the *Propheſy*; for how proudly hath the *Biſhop of Rome* thus exalted himſelf, and been ſtiled, by his Flatterers and vile Dependants, a [b] God, who ought not to be called to an Account; the ſupreme Deity on Earth, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, by whom Princes reign, and upon whom the Right of Kings depends? Nay, the *Gloſſator* upon the *Canon Law* hath given him the high and blaſphemous Title, *of our Lord God the Pope*. And *the Popes* have acted accordingly, abſolving Subjects from their Allegiance to their lawful Princes, fomenting and raiſing Rebellions, depoſing or murdering rightful Princes, and ſetting up others in their Stead. With what Pride and Haughtineſs have they called *Emperors* their Vaſſals? and even obliged ſome of them to hold the Bridle till

[a] 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Eph. ii. 20, 21, 22. 1 Tim. iii. 15. Heb. iii. 6. 1. Pet. ii. 5, 6, 7. Rev. iii. 12.
[b] Vid. Canon. Diſtinct. 96. c. ſatis evidentia.

the Pope has mounted his Horſe: Or to bear up his Train after him, when *his Holineſs* has been pleaſed to walk in a pompous Proceſſion? Nay, with what amazing Inſolence have the *Romiſh Prieſts* whipt Kings and ſovereign Princes, and the *Pope* has even ſet his Foot upon an *Emperor*'s Neck? He has claimed the ſole Right of nominating, inveſting, or confirming the Princes and Rulers of the Earth.

If this be not [a] to *exalt himſelf above all that is called a God*, or an *Emperor*; there can be no Event, to anſwer this, or any *Propheſy* whatſoever.

I think Σεβασμα was deſigned to refer to the *Roman Emperor*. But if we underſtand it (as ſome do) of Objects of, or Things pertaining to *Religious Worſhip*: —— The *Propheſy* is ſtill accompliſhed. For doth not the *Biſhop of Rome* claim the ſole Power of ordaining Sacraments, conſecrating Altars and Images, canonizing Saints, and appointing what Sort of *religious Worſhip* ſhall be paid; as well as to whom? Otherwiſe, how comes it to paſs, that the *Virgin Mary* is more frequently invoked than the GOD and *Father of* OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST? Is not this, moſt evidently, a *religigious Tyranny* founded in, and ſtill ſupported by the Pretence of *Religion?* Other *Potentates* have ſometimes called in Religion for a Pretence, and laid aſide that Pretence, when their Purpoſe has been ſerved; but no *Tyranny*, beſides this, hath been intirely founded in, and all along carried on, merely by a Pretence to *Re-*

[a] In this Expreſſion there ſeems to be an evident Alluſion to Dan. xi. 36.

ligion.

ligion. And how exactly has THE APOSTLE propheſyed of this? when he foretold, that he would *ſit in the Temple of* GOD (not *a God*, or temporal Potentate; but) *as a God*, i. e. under another, a religious Pretence [a], he would lay Claim to the Power of a *temporal Monarch, (in ordine ad ſpiritualia)* under the Pretence of being *the Head of the Catholick Church*, and having *all ſpiritual Power*, he would thus exalt himſelf. And, I need not ſay, that under this Colour, the *Biſhop of Rome* has claimed a moſt exorbitant Power, and that herein *this his Kingdom is diverſe from all Kingdoms.* For other Princes rule in their own Dominions, by their temporal Power. But, under the Notion of ſpiritual Power, the *Pope* claims Obedience in Kingdoms and Countries, where a foreign temporal Prince could have no Claim. So that tho' he does not directly pretend to be *a God*, or *a temporal Prince*; yet he ſhows himſelf to be one; and hath often been, in Reality, poſſeſſed of equal, or greater Power.

From our ſaying, that "by the *Temple of* "GOD, in this *Propheſy*, is meant the *Chriſtian* "*Church*," *Bellarmine* would infer, "that then "the *Church of Rome*, muſt be the *Church of* GOD: "For there the *Pope* ſitteth upon his Throne." But his Argument is vain and frivolous. And no more will hence follow, than that the *Church of Rome* may be called "*the Church of* "GOD," in the ſame Senſe that an [b] *adulterous Woman* may be called *a Wife*; or, as the greateſt Corruptions may retain the Names, which

[a] Lactant. l. vii. §. 7. Rex ille teterrimus, ſed Mendaciorum propheta, & ſeipſum conſtituet, & vocabit Deum, &c. [b] Rev. xvii. 1, 2, &c.

were given in the Times of the greateſt Simplicity and Purity.

V. 6. "And ye know what now hinders, that "he may be revealedin his own proper ſeaſon." From St. PAUL's cautious and [a] covert Manner of ſpeaking, leſt he ſhould offend the higher Powers, as well as from other Arguments, 'tis highly probable that the *Roman Emperors* were the obſtructing Power. And 'tis remarkable, that, upon that very Account, the [a] *primitive Chriſtians* uſed to pray for the Continuance of the *Roman Empire*, viz. "to hinder the Appearance of *Antichriſt*."

[b] *Tertullian* (who flouriſhed toward the Concluſion of the ſecond Century) ſaith, "Now "the Myſtery of Iniquity worketh, only he "who letteth, will lett, 'till he be taken out "of the Way. What is this (ſays he) but the "[c] *Roman Empire*."

And [d] St. *Jerome*, when he heard that *Rome* was taken by *Alaricus* the *Goth*, ſhewed plainly, that he expected the Appearance of *Anti-Chriſt*, upon the Removal of the *Roman Empire*, and wondered that it was not more ſpeedy. "For (ſays he) he that hindered, is taken out "of the Way, and yet we do not underſtand "that *Anti-Chriſt* approaches."

V. 7. "For the Myſtery of Iniquity already "works; only there is one that obſtructs, till "he be taken out of the Way."

[a] Vid. St. *Auſt.* de Civitate Dei, l. xx. c. 19. [b] De Reſur. Carnis. c. 24. [c] See alſo *Lactant.* l. vii. §. 16, 17. and *Jerome* on *Daniel*, who ſays it was a general Opinion, that towards the End of the World 10 Kings ſhould ſhare the *Roman Empire*; and that *Anti-Chriſt* ſhould be the 11th, and overcome them all. [d] Ad *Geront.* de *Monogam.*

'Tis impoſſible for us to know more of the Tendency towards *this grand Apoſtaſy* in the APOSTLES Days, than the APOSTLES or *primitive Chriſtians* have mentioned in *their Writings*. *Hymæneus* and *Alexander* ſubverted the *Chriſtians*, by teaching falſe Doctrines. *Diotrephes* aſpired after the Preeminence. *Demas* over-loved this preſent World. Others are charged with making a Gain of Godlineſs. Some by a falſe Humility fell into the Worſhip of *Angels*; others placed *Religion* in a Diſtinction between Meats and Drinks, forbiding to marry, and injoining Abſtinence from ſuch Things as GOD allows; and finally, many others placed their *Religion* in Feſtivals, and New-Moons, in a Diſtinction between Days and Weeks, Months and Years: Not conſidering that "*the Kingdom of* GOD conſiſted in "Righteouſneſs and Peace, and Joy in the "*holy Spirit.*" From ſuch Corruptions of *Chriſtianity* it was, that St. JOHN ſaid "There "were then many *Anti-Chriſts.*" As we know what the *Apoſtaſy* is, at its Height, we may juſtly conclude, that every Corruption in Worſhip, Faith, or Practice, was a making Way for *this Apoſtaſy*; ſomewhat of the Spirit of the *Man of Sin*, or the *Myſtery of Iniquity then working*. And (according to this Part of the *Propheſy*) 'tis well known, that they have not arriv'd to their *grand Corruption* of *Chriſtianity*, but Step by Step; and at the firſt by ſlow and almoſt inſenſible Degrees.

V. 8. "And then ſhall be revealed that "wicked one, or lawleſs perſon," and 'tis notoriouſly evident, that the Removal of the

Roman Emperors did actually open the Way for the Advancement of the *Biſhop of Rome* to his Power and Grandeur. Then was *that wicked one* ſignally revealed. ὁ ανομ&, *that lawleſs Perſon*; how proper a Title for him, who hath been declared to be ſubject to no Law, but that he can, by the Plenitude of his Power, make Right Wrong, and Wrong Right, Virtue Vice, and Vice Virtue; that he can diſpenſe with all Laws, humane and divine. And that he may do all Things above Law, againſt Law, and without Law?

V. 8. (" Whom the LORD will conſume by " the breath of his mouth, and will utterly " aboliſh by the brightneſs of his coming:") Theſe Words muſt be conſidered, as thrown in by Way of *Parentheſis*. Or elſe his Deſtruction, mentioned in this Verſe, will be placed before his Coming and exalting himſelf to ſuch Power, by the moſt wicked and deceitful Methods, mentioned in the next Verſe. And I ſuppoſe that it was thrown in to comfort the *Chriſtians*, under ſuch a Proſpect, by the aſſured Hopes of *this Tyranny*'s coming to an End.

As the laſt Sentence was inſerted by Way of *Parentheſis*, we may go on with the principal Subject, as if it had not been there; V. 9, 10, 11, 12. When the obſtructing Power is removed. " Then ſhall that wicked one be re- " vealed, whoſe coming is after the working " of *Satan*, with all power, and ſigns, and " lying wonders;" and with the moſt fraudulent and unrighteous Cheats; tho' none need to be deluded thereby, if they are Lovers of Truth and Virtue.

The

The many Pretences to *Miracles* in the *Church of Rome* have abundantly fulfilled this. They have aſſerted that *Churches* have been taken up in one Place, and carried thro' the Air into diſtant Countries. That Images have nodded, ſmiled, frowned, or ſpoken upon Occaſion. That the Blood of a Saint hath been annually liquefied on a certain Day of the Year. That the [a] firſt Convert St. *Gaul* made in *Germany* was a Bear. That St. *Antony of Padua* preach'd to a vaſt Aſſembly of Fiſhes, whom he had miraculouſly called together, and who devoutly heard him *preach the Word of the* LORD. That St. *Francis* preached with great Succeſs to Birds and Beaſts, which he thought OUR LORD had commanded, *Mark* xvi. 15. when he bade the APOSTLES to "Go into all "the world, and to preach the goſpel to *every* "*creature.*"

Numberleſs have been the fictitious Apparitions of the Souls of dead Men, in order to prove ſuch a State as *Purgatory*. Nay, to prove this, what have they not pretended to? Voices from Heaven or Hell; Cures at the Shrines of their Saints, or by their Bones and Reliques; to which they have ſometimes aſcrib'd the Power to raiſe Perſons from the Dead! all the *Legends* and lying Wonders which the moſt diabolical Invention could contrive, have been made uſe of, to found and ſupport this *notorious Apoſtaſy*.

For my own Part I queſtion the Reality of all their Miracles [b]. But ſuppoſe any of them

[a] *Addiſon*'s Travels, p 284. ibid. p. 47, *&c.* [b] Vid. St. *Auſtin.* de Civit. Dei, l. xx. c. 19. However, that they lay Claim to Miracles, ſee the late Popiſh Catechiſm, Appendix, §. 13.

to

to be real, a *Miracle* only ſheweth that ſome *Being* interpoſes, who is ſuperior in Power to Man. And, as we muſt judge by the Doctrine and Practice they would promote, whether *Miracles* are worked by a good or a bad Spirit; 'tis evident that (if they work any *real Miracles)* they are aſſiſted by a *malevolent and wicked Spirit*; becauſe they would thereby promote Ignorance and Falſhood, Idolatry and Wickedneſs.

They have, likewiſe, by the moſt unrighteous Deceit, appeared as profeſs'd Friends to *Chriſtianity* [a], tho' really its greateſt Enemies.

They have canonized Men for Saints, who have been the moſt flagitious Sinners. And have conſecrated Murders, Treaſons, Maſſacres, and Rebellions, by promiſing their Votaries, that they ſhould not paſs thro' the Fire of *Purgatory*, but ſhould have immediate Entrance into Heaven; ſuppoſe they ſhould be cut off in perpetrating ſuch black and horrid Crimes.

It were endleſs to mention their pious Frauds, and ſpecious aſtoniſhing Methods to encreaſe their Number; to draw in the worſt of Men, and to diſcourage the beſt; in order to gratify their own exorbitant Luſt of Power and Ambition.

And muſt not Men have caſt off *the Love of*

[a] Lactant. l. vii. § 19. Hic eſt autem, qui appellatur *Antichriſtus*; ſed ſe ipſe Chriſtum mentietur; & contra verum dimicabit. How remarkably applicable is this to the *Biſhop of Rome*, who lays Claim to the Title "of *the Succeſſor of St.* PETER, *and* CHRIST'*s Vicar upon* "*Earth*; and conſequently, the Father and Paſtor of all the Faith-"ful?" See the late Popiſh Catechiſm, c. ult.

Truth,

Truth, who can delight in their fabulous Traditions, and monſtrous lying *Legends*, and tamely give up *the Scriptures*, or ſpeak of them with Contempt.

Thus have I briefly gone thro' the ſeveral Parts of *this Propheſy*, and ſhewn (I think) that *no Propheſy* can be more exactly accompliſhed.

COROLLARIES.

(1.) "From what hath been ſaid 'tis eaſy to "judge concerning *Popery* and the *Reformation*." 'Tis not the Largeneſs of a *Church*, nor her external Pomp and [a] Splendour, which makes her the *true Church*. Nor are they always the *Schiſmaticks*, who are the feweſt in Number. No, ſuppoſe all the *Nations* of the Earth ſhould generally agree together, in maintaining abſurd Doctrines, immoral and unreaſonable Practices, Uncharitableneſs and Impoſitions.—— They are properly the *Heretics* and *Schiſmatics*; and let the Number who ſeparate from them, in Defence of Truth, Virtue, Liberty, and Charity, be never ſo few, they are in Reality *the true Church*. And the other is only *a grand Schiſm*, or *worldly Faction:* Even tho' their Party be as numerous, as that with the Soles of their Feet they could dry up Rivers.

Holding the Truth in Love is a Mark of *the true Church*. And ſuch as forſake this are *Apoſtates*. Such is the *Schiſm*, *Faction*, and *Apoſtaſy* of the *preſent Church of Rome*; that

[a] See the *Appendix* to the late Popiſh Catechiſm. §. 2.

Mother

Mother of Idolatries, and of the Abominations of the Earth. And *Reformation* is a moſt glorious Thing, when founded upon its right *Baſis* of Reaſon and Scripture, Liberty and Charity.

(2.) " How ſtrong an Argument may, what " hath been ſaid, afford us for the Truth of " the *Chriſtian Religion?*" Here was a moſt ſignal Event foretold, and that many Ages before it came to paſs; —— An Event, the like to which had never happened ſince the Creation of the World, (and, moſt probably, there never will happen ſuch another;) it was, therefore, an Event, which was out of the Reach of all humane Conjecture, or Foreſight. And yet Experience hath ſhewn that the *Prediction* was exact.

Neither *Enthuſiaſts*, nor *Impoſtors* could, poſſibly, have gueſſed ſo agreeably to ſo uncommon an Event. Nor can we, who have lived to ſee ſo much of the Accompliſhment, deſcribe *this Apoſtaſy* in a more juſt, or lively Mannner, than St. PAUL has here done, in a few Verſes, and St. JOHN, more largely, in the *Revelation.*

They, therefore, muſt have been *true Prophets* and *divinely inſpir'd:* Or elſe they never could have uttered ſuch remarkable *Predictions*, which Time and Fact have ſo amazingly verified.

Some other Arguments for the Truth of the *Chriſtian Religion*, tho' juſt and concluſive, may be of a more ſubtle and difficult Nature: But the Riſe and Progreſs of *this Apoſtaſy* is a Fact, a plain, notorious, well known Fact: An Argument which cannot eaſily

eaſily be evaded; but muſt ſtrike the Virtuous and Attentive!

All *Church Hiſtory*, for ſeveral paſt *Centuries*, is full of it; and we need only open our Eyes, and we may behold too much of it. For *the Man of Sin* is even now upon *his Throne*, exalting himſelf, as much as he can, above all the Kings of the Earth; and with ſuch ſtrong Deluſions ſeducing the *Nations*, as to make many of them believe a Lye. They may pretend, among us, that *Popery* is alter'd, and become *a meek and harmleſs Religion*; and, that they have thrown off that *perſecuting Spirit*, which they have formerly diſcovered. But how lately have we heard of the diſmal Effects of their cruel and tyrannical Temper? and the poor baniſhed *Saltzburghers* (whom 'tis the Glory of this *Proteſtant Nation* ſo generouſly to have relieved) are too freſh an Inſtance and Proof of the *perſecuting* Spirit of *Popery*, to ſuffer it to be believed among us, that the *Church of Rome*, tho' dreſſed up in Sheep's Cloathing, is any other than a ravenous Wolf.

Our Ancestors felt the dreadful Effects of their *perſecuting* Spirit, and experienced their tender Mercies to be cruel. Nay, we ourſelves were in imminent Danger: But by a remarkable Interpoſition of the divine Providence, the Snare was broken, and we have eſcaped. Yet all pious and benevolent Perſons are daily mourn-

ing over this *anti-chriſtian Corruption* and *Tyranny*; and ready to ſay, "How long, "O Lord, holy, juſt, and true; wilt not "thou deliver thine Elect, that cry unto "thee Day and Night!"

CHRISTIANITY is a *Religion* reaſonable in itſelf, promotes the pureſt Virtue, was at firſt planted by *Miracles* and great Plenty of *ſpiritual Gifts*. And here is a remarkable *Propheſy*, which (after ſo many hundred Years) is exactly verified, by a notorious Event. What Evidences would be ſufficient, where all theſe are rejected?

(3.) "We ought not to be ſhocked at "the preſent State of the *Chriſtian Church*. "Becauſe ſuch, did the APOSTLES of OUR "LORD *propheſy*, that it would be." Tho' the beſt of Things are liable to Corruption; yet one would hardly have thought it poſſible, that ſo great, ſo notorious a *Corruption*, could (by any Pretence) have ſprung out of the *Chriſtian Religion*. Look into the *New Teſtament*, which contains the *Religion* of JESUS, and look into the Polity and Conſtitution of the *Church of Rome*; and you may eaſily perceive that Light and Darkneſs are not more unlike. The *Goſpel* every where requires the greateſt Virtue and Purity, and this wicked Church (which ſchiſmatically calls herſelf the [a] *Catholick and only true Church*) has invented ſo many Arts, to make Men very

[a] See the Appendix to the late Popiſh Catechiſm, §. 3.

religious

religious, without any Virtue or Goodneſs at all; that (wherever 'tis eſtabliſhed and prevails) it incourages almoſt all Manner of Wickedneſs and Abominations.

DANIEL [a] *propheſied* that the GOD *of Heaven* would erect *a Kingdom*, which ſhould be ſubject to *the Son of Man*; and we ſay, that *this Kingdom of Righteouſneſs* was actually erected by OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. Now, upon looking abroad into a great Part of *Chriſtendom*, 'tis natural to inquire, "Is this the *Kingdom* prophe-"ſied of?"

No, to prevent the Anxiety, which might ariſe in the Minds of *true Chriſtians* from ſuch a Difficulty, it was alſo *propheſied*, that out of *this ſpiritual Kingdom* ſhould ariſe one of the greateſt *Apoſtaſies* and *Corruptions* that ever appeared in the World. Though *true Chriſtianity* (as contained in the *Scriptures)* have all along been invariably the ſame.

(4.) "How ought we to rejoice that "*this tyrannical and unrighteous power* "ſhall come to an end? and think our-"ſelves obliged (from a ſenſe of our duty "to GOD, and out of *Benevolence* to *Man-*"*kind)* to do every Thing, in our Pow-"er, towards bringing about ſo happy an "Event?"

BLESSED BE GOD that we are delivered from this worſe than *Egyptian Dark-*

[a] Dan ii. 44. and vii. 13, 14.

neſs and Slavery. Particularly, let us reflect, with Gratitude, upon our narrow Eſcape under the auſpicious Conduct of *the glorious Prince of Orange*, *K. William* of immortal Memory, who (by the Favour of a kind Providence) laid the Foundation for a later Eſcape, when, by Means of a perſecuting and bigotted Faction, a *Popiſh Pretender* was ready to aſcend the Throne. Then it was that *King William*'s noble Legacy took Place, by the Coming in of *the illuſtrious Houſe of Hanover.* A Family, who were amongſt the *firſt Proteſters againſt Popery*, and who have ever ſince continued *Proteſtants.* And (which hath been, in a diſtinguiſhing Manner, the Glory of that illuſtrious Houſe; and attended with the greateſt and moſt diffuſive Bleſſings; —— they have, upon many Occaſions, been) ſtrenuous Aſſerters of Liberty, both civil and religious.

Blessed be God for ſuch a *royal Family*, and let all the People ſay Amen. May they and their Deſcendants continue Friends to Mankind, throughout all coming Generations! and experience the Joys and ample Bleſſings which attend the ſincere Love of Truth, Virtue, Religion, and Liberty!

'Tis ſaid that this corrupt and perſecuting *Religion* gains Ground in this free and Proteſtant Nation; and even in this Day

Day of Light and Liberty.—— But what Madneſs muſt poſſeſs ſuch as would bring us back again into this *ſpiritual Egypt*? When all wiſe Men would avoid her, for Fear of, at laſt, partaking in her Plagues?

'Tis the Duty of all *Proteſtants* to give up whatever *abſurd Doctrines*, or *impoſing Principles*, they may have hitherto mixed with what is truly reaſonable and *Chriſtian*. 'Till then, it muſt be expected that *Popery* will always get Footing among us.

THANKS BE TO GOD, that we have *the Scriptures* ſo common, and in our own Language; that we are allowed *the Liberty of private Judgment*; and bleſſed with ſo many, and ſuch excellent Helps to underſtand *our Bible!* That ſuch a *Spirit of Liberty* and free Inquiry hath, in this laſt Age, gone out into the Land! May Heaven diffuſe this *happy Spirit*, and grant it the longeſt Continuance!

'Tis not 300 Years ago, ſince *our Anceſtors* were required to believe the groſſeſt *Abſurdities*, and to practiſe the moſt flagrant *Idolatry*, and that upon Pain of forfeiting all that was dear to them in this World, and of being ſentenced to eternal Damnation in the next.

Tho' the firſt Reformers made a glorious Stand, and went great Lengths, in a little Time; yet they could not ſhake off one of the worſt Parts of *Popery*, viz. *the Spirit of Infallibility and Perſecution*. And a Race of

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tyrannical Kings, ſupported by *covetous and ambitious Prieſts*, continued to practiſe upon *Proteſtants*, that Cruelty, which all *Proteſtants* had ſo much and ſo juſtly exclaimed againſt, when practiſed by the *Papiſts* upon themſelves. By this Means it has come to paſs, that *true Liberty*, and *free Inquiry* are but of Yeſterday. —— A Bleſſing reſerved by Providence for us!

The moſt acceptable Way of teſtifying our Gratitude to ALMIGHTY GOD, for ſo great, ſo unſpeakable a Bleſſing, is to ſtudy the *Scriptures* with Care, and to form our Temper and Practice accordingly. —— To allow others that *Liberty of private Judgment*, which we ourſelves ſo ardently deſire. To avoid Uncharitableneſs towards ſuch as differ from us, and to ſhow our Good-Will to the Perſons of the *Papiſts*; whilſt we ſo much and ſo juſtly abhor *their Religion*. Let us ever take Care to watch againſt a *perſecuting Spirit*, in all the Branches and Degrees of it; and to lay the great Streſs of *Religion*, where the *Scriptures of the New Teſtament* have laid it (not in abſtruſe Notions, and unintelligible Subtleties: Not in Forms and Ceremonies, nor in an empty Profeſſion of the pureſt and beſt Religion; but) upon the ſincere Love of GOD and one another; upon a due governing our Paſſions and ſenſual Appetites, and the habitual Practice of univerſal Holineſs. For what ſignifieth it *what Church*

any

any Man belongs to, what Profeſſion of *Religion* he makes, or what Advantages he injoys; —— if he doth not love God and keep his Commandments? If he abuſes his Liberty to Licentiouſneſs; and in the Midſt of ſuch marvellous Light, ſhows that he loves Darkneſs, by leading a ſcandalous and wicked Life; which, of all others, is the *blackeſt Hereſy*, and the moſt flagrant and moſt notorious *Corruption and Apoſtaſy?*

The END.

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Preached at

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February 27, 1734-5.

By *JEREMIAH HUNT*, D.D.

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M DCC XXXV.

MARK vi. 12.

And they went out, and preach'd that men ſhould repent.

I. THE deſign or view of the principles both of natural and reveal'd religion is to bring us to the ſteddy and conſtant practice of ſincere piety and real virtue. Under theſe are comprehended a due regulation of the propenſities we find in our make to pleaſures of ſenſe, intereſt and honour; by the practice of ſobriety, temperance, purity, moderation, and humility: a proper government of the paſſions, and particularly of fear, by a rational courage, and a well-directed fortitude of mind; and of undue reſentment and anger, by meekneſs and long-ſuffering: a uniform and ſteddy care not to infringe

fringe any of the rights of others, of which a liberty to judge for ones ſelf in matters of religion, which is unalienable, is not of the leaſt importance: a ſincere and undiſſembled love of mankind, attended with all the proper inſtances of goodneſs, whereby their miſeries may be leſſen'd, and their true happineſs promoted: finally, a ſupreme love of the one true and living God, to whom all conceivable perfections belong, and whoſe goodneſs is diffus'd through all the works of his hands; a due fear and reverence of him; a careful and conſtant imitation of thoſe perfections, which are capable of being tranſcribed by us into temper and life; a fervent and ſteddy addreſſing our prayers and praiſes to him; a conſtant regard to him, by taking him into our view, eſpecially when we form any important deſigns, refering all events to his diſpoſal, ſubmiting in every thing to his will, expreſſing ever an unſhaken dependance upon him, and whenever we deviate in the leaſt from any of his commands, returning without delay to our duty.

The ſteddy and perſevering practice of all theſe virtues is the great and ultimate

mate deſign of the principles of truth, which reaſon, duly cultivated, without the aſſiſtance of revelation, is capable of diſcovering. And without ſuch a practice, a profeſſion of the cleareſt and moſt indiſputable truths of natural religion, namely, the exiſtence of God, the perfections which are to be aſcribed to him, his providence, the difference of actions, and a future ſtate, will be of no ſignificancy to our true happineſs.

To the ſame end are revealed truths directed, as means, and motives; and without attaining that end are alike inſignificant. Hence it is that the patriarchs, to whom God expreſſed particular and diſtinguiſh'd favours, are deſcrib'd as *walking with God, pleaſing him, and being righteous in their generation.* And on that account their worſhip and ſacrifices were accepted, and for the failure thereof *Cain* and his offering were rejected.

When God ſet up a polity among the *Jews* to ſecure them from idolatry, and the vices which attended it, and for that purpoſe wiſely injoin'd numerous rites; many of them paid ſuch deference to the ritual and ceremonial laws, as to diſregard the moral. To reclaim them God

ſent

ſent at ſeveral times prophets, who declared to them in his name, that their ſacrifices and oblations, their waſhings and purifications, their feaſts and ſolemn aſſemblies, their faſts and ſevereſt humiliations, were ſo far from being acceptable in his ſight, if not accompanied with the practice of univerſal righteouſneſs and charity; that on the contrary without thoſe virtues, theſe very rites, tho' of his own inſtitution, were the greateſt abomination in his ſight. * *To what purpoſe is the multitude of your ſacrifices unto me? ſaith the Lord: I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beaſts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. Waſh ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well, ſeek judgment, relieve the oppreſſed, judge the fatherleſs, plead for the widow.* Then, *tho' your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as ſnow; tho' they be red like crimſon, they ſhall be as wool.* And again: † *Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow my ſelf before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year*

* Iſ. I. 11, 16, 17, 18. † Mic. VI. 6, 7, 8.

old?

old? Will the Lord be pleas'd with thouſands of rams, or with ten thouſands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firſt-born for my tranſgreſſion, the fruit of my body for the ſin of my ſoul? He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, aud to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

When the kingdom of the *Meſſiah* approach'd, *John*, his forerunner, was ſent by God to preach and exhort his hearers to quit every courſe of vice, and ingage in the practice of every virtue, as the beſt preparatory to enter into that kingdom, in which eternal and immutable righteouſneſs ſhould be chiefly and ultimately recommended.

Jeſus, the *Meſſiah*, appears, and calls thoſe of his own nation to a change of heart and life; aſſures them, that their righteouſneſs muſt be ſincere and inward, exceeding that of the ſcribes and phariſees, or they ſhould in no caſe enter into the kingdom of heaven; opens to them in the cleareſt and moſt extenſive manner the duties of ſincere piety, and real virtue; and tells them, that whoſoever would hear and practice them, he

would * *liken him to a wiſe man, who built his houſe upon a rock; and the rain deſcended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that houſe, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.* On the contrary, ſais he, *Every one that heareth theſe ſayings of mine, and doth them not, ſhall be likened to a fooliſh man, which built his houſe upon the ſand; and the rain deſcended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that houſe, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.* The ſame doctrine was taught by the apoſtles, who by him were equally appointed to be the *foundation*, upon which the Chriſtian church was built, † *Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone.* * *The grace of God*, ſais St. *Paul, that bringeth ſalvation to all men, hath appear'd, teaching us, that denying ungodlineſs, and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world.* In this ſenſe the phraſe ‖ *ſound doctrine* is us'd, and the goſpel is call'd ‡ *The doctrine, which is according to godlineſs.*

II. But the practice of ſincere piety and extenſive morality, becoming diffi-

* Mat. VII. 24,—— 27. † Eph. II. 20. * Tit. II. 11. ‖ 1 Tim. I. 10. Tit. I. 9. ‡ 1 Tim. VI. 3.

cult,

cult, through the indulgence of irregular appetites, and inordinate affections, many (too many, God knows) in every age have contriv'd more eaſy ways, and endeavour'd to reconcile their criminal inclinations and conduct with the expectation of the favour of God, and of receiving rewards from him. Give me leave to call theſe *ſubſtitutes*; ſince they are put in the room of religious virtue, or real reformation and amendment. Now perſons in power obſerving ſuch bad diſpoſitions in the populace, made the beſt uſe of them they could, to carry on their political views, and ambitious deſigns. In the moſt early times the characters of king and prieſt were united in one perſon, but afterwards thoſe offices were placed in different hands. And then princes thought it proper, when their views of ſtate made it neceſſary, to uſe the prieſts as tools to promote their deſigns; and the prieſts, by way of recompence for their ſervices, gain'd unjuſt and exorbitant powers; while the people, who ſhar'd in the corruption, looked on with no ſmall ſatisfaction. Thus the pure religion of nature became depraved. * *Varro* therefore, a

* Vid. *Aug. De Civit. Dei, l. vi. c.* 5.

learned Roman, diſtinguiſhed the mythic and political from the natural religion taught by the philoſophers, who recommended virtue, and the imitation of deity, and on that account met with unkind and cruel treatment. *Socrates* for oppoſing eſtabliſhed corruptions had a cup of poiſon put into his hand; which made *Plato*, his ſcholar, go into prudentials, and be upon the reſerve.

The falſe prophets, who ſprung up under the Moſaic inſtitution, were led by the ſame corrupt principles. Thus we are told by the ſacred hiſtorian, that * *The king of Iſrael gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and ſaid unto them: Shall I go againſt Ramoth-gilead to battle, or ſhall I forbear? And they ſaid*, conſulting rather the inclination of the king, than truth, *Go up; for the Lord ſhall deliver it into the hand of the king. And Jehoſaphat ſaid: Is there not here a prophet of the Lord beſides, that we might inquire of him? And the king of Iſrael ſaid unto Jehoſaphat: There is yet one man (Micaiah the ſon of Imlah) by whom we may inquire of the Lord; but I hate him, for he doth not*

* 1 Kings, XXII. 6, &c.

pro-

propheſy good concerning me, but evil. He however ſent a meſſenger to him, who when he came to *Micaiah*, addreſs'd him thus: *Behold now, the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth; let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and ſpeak that which is good. And Micaiah ſaid: As the Lord liveth, what the Lord ſaith unto me, that will I ſpeak.* Which accordingly the prophet did. And what was the conſequence? *Thus ſaith the king: Put this fellow in the priſon, and feed him with bread of affliction, and with water of affliction, until I come in peace again.* And in like manner the prophet *Iſaiah:* * *Now go, write it before them in a table, that this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord; which ſay to the ſeers, ſee not; and to the prophets, propheſy not to us right things; ſpeak unto us ſmooth things, propheſy deceits.* A ſtrong and lively deſcription of the ſource of religious corruptions! Again: † *I have ſeen alſo in the prophets of Jeruſalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies, they ſtrengthen alſo the hands*

* Iſ. XXX. 8, 9, 10. † Jer. XXIII. 14, 16, 17. Jer. V. 31.

of

of evil-doers, that none doth return from his wickedneſs. Thus ſaith the Lord of hoaſts: Hearken not unto the words of the prophets, that propheſy unto you, they make you vain. They ſay ſtill unto them, who deſpiſe me, the Lord hath ſaid ye ſhall have peace; and they ſay unto every one, that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, no evil ſhall come upon thee. By theſe paſſages, to which many others might be added of the ſame nature, we may ſee clearly, what gave riſe under the diſpenſation of the law to the corrupting the religion of God, and by what principles this was effected.

Our Saviour cautions the people, who attended his inſtructions, to * beware of falſe prophets; and ſuppoſing their capacity of judging, lays down a rule to diſtinguiſh them. *They come in ſheep's clothing*, the dreſs of the ancient prophets; *but inwardly they are ravenous wolves*, led on by the luſts of power and intereſt they are deſirous of making a prey of you. *Ye ſhall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thiſtles?* The ſame character of *grievous wolves*, *Paul*, the

* Mat. VII. 15.

apoſtle

apoſtle of the Gentiles, * gives of the falſe apoſtles, and judaizing teachers: to whom alſo *Peter*, the apoſtle of the circumciſion, † probably refers.

And ſince the repreſentation of what the ſcripture ſais of theſe corrupters of Chriſtianity, will afford us a clear and diſtinct view of the ſpring and motives of corrupting the religion of God, give me leave in a larger manner to attempt it. When the firſt profeſſors of the Chriſtian doctrine were expoſed for the ſake of it to many ſufferings, occaſion'd by the unbelieving Jews, the falſe apoſtles endeavour'd, as an expedient to ſave themſelves from perſecution, to mingle Judaiſm and Chriſtianity together. ‖ *As many*, ſais St. *Paul*, *as make a fair ſhew in the fleſh, they conſtrain you to be circumcis'd, only leſt they ſhould ſuffer perſecution for the croſs of Chriſt. For neither they themſelves, who are circumcis'd, keep the law; but deſire to have you circumcis'd, that they may glory in your fleſh.* That the expedient was effectual, appears from what he had ſaid before: ‡ *And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumciſion, then is the offence of the croſs ceaſed.* To gain favour with the

* Acts XX. 29, 30. † 2 Pet. II. 1. ‖ Gal. VI. 12. 13. ‡ Gal. V. 11.

unbe-

unbelieving Gentiles, these false and deceitful workers taught the Christians, that it was lawful to eat things sacrific'd to idols even in their temples. * *I have a few things against thee* [the church of *Pergamos*] *because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols.* From the same intention of ingratiating themselves with the enemies of Christianity, they introduc'd worshiping of angels. † *Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility, and worshiping of angels; intruding into those things, which he hath not seen, vainly puft up in his fleshly mind.* ‖ And from the same motive they denied the resurrection; and colour'd over this their error, by saying: *That* ‡ *the resurrection was past already.* And to strengthen farther their interest, they took the part, which all corrupters of true religion have ever done, and taught licentious doctrines; which is a method extremely pleasing to corrupt men, who dislike sincere piety, and extensive virtue. Such men * *will not indure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, hav-*

* Rev. II. 24, 20. † Col. II. 18. ‖ 1 Cor. XV. ‡ 2 Tim. II. 18. * 2 Tim. IV. 3. 2. Pet. II. 18.

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ing itching ears, that want to be ſooth'd, *and they ſhall turn away their ears from the truth.* To gratifie theſe they taught, that fornication was lawful. † *Thou ſuffereſt the woman Jezabel, who calleth herſelf a propheteſs, to teach, and ſeduce my ſervants to commit fornication.* ‡ They *crept into houſes,, and led captive ſilly women, laden with ſins, and led away with diverſe luſts.* Of theſe St. *Jude* ſais, ⸸ That *there were certain men crept in unawares, turning the grace of God into laſciviouſneſs, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Theſe corrupters of pure Chriſtianity were influenc'd by views of eaſe, intereſt, and ambition: ‖ *teaching things, which they ought not, for filthy lucre's ſake:* * *whoſe belly was their God, and who minded earthly things.* Of theſe the apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks, when he ſais: ‡ *For ye ſuffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himſelf, if a man ſmite you on the face.* They ſet up through pride and inſolence for apoſtles, tho' they wanted the characters of ſuch. †*And thou haſt tried them, who ſay, they are apoſtles, and are not; and haſt found them liars.* And when they wanted real piety, to cover their intereſted and ambitious deſigns,

† Rev. II. 20. ‡ 2 Tim. III. 6. ⸸ v. 4. ‖ Tit. I. 11.
* Phil. III. 19. ‡ 2 Cor. II. 20. † Rev. II. 2.

they put on ſpecious ſhews, and † *tranſform'd themſelves into angels of light.*

From this repreſentation of the Jewiſh falſe apoſtles, one would imagine there ſhould not ariſe any other, who ſhould outdo them in cunning craftineſs, and artifices of deceit. And yet the apoſtle *Paul* by a prophetic ſpirit tells us, *that day* (namely, of the coming of our Lord) ſhould be preceded by an apoſtacy from the pure and ſimple doctrine of Chriſtianity, which was to proceed gradually, till united under one head, and ‖ *the man of ſin ſhould be revealed, the ſon of perdition; who oppoſeth, and exalteth himſelf above all that is call'd God,* or that is worſhiped, that is, above all magiſtrates, who are call'd *Gods*, and even the imperial dignity; *ſo that he as a God ſiteth in the temple of God,* under the pretence of being the head of the church, which is the prerogative of *Chriſt* alone; laying claim to exorbitant temporal power, contrary to the nature of *Chriſt*'s kingdom, which is not of this world.

III. Having trac'd through the hiſtory of ſcripture the ſources of corrupting true religion, and ſhewn that flatter-

† 2 Cor. XI. 14. ‖ 2 Theſ. II. 3, 4, &c.

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ing the deprav'd taſt of wicked men, who would reconcile criminal inclinations and vitious behaviour with the hope of divine favour and future happineſs, from intereſted and ambitious views, has given riſe to ſuch corruptions: let us now ſee, whether the unſcriptural doctrines (by which are meant, either the opinions, which appear contrary to ſcripture; or which have no ſcripture to found them upon, and are additions to it) which the church of *Rome* entertains, are not calculated to the ſame corrupt views.

Is it not apparent, that the undue claim the pope makes to be univerſal head of the Chriſtian world, and ſucceſſor to an apoſtle, muſt ſpring from intereſted and aſpiring proſpects? How does it flatter the ambition of a prieſt to have the people believe, that contrary to ſenſe, reaſon, and ſcripture, after he has pronounc'd the words of conſecration, the bread and wine ſhould be changed into the real body and blood of Chriſt, together with his ſoul and divinity? Is it not calculated to ſerve worldly deſigns, that the pope ſhould iſſue out indulgences? What other views than intereſt, and heaping up a prodigious maſs of wealth, could give riſe to the fictitious doctrine of purgatory?

ry? Is it not with the ſame view, that voluntary oblations to ſhrines, as well as thoſe which have been injoin'd by way of penance, have been incouraged? Does it not flatter the vanity and pride of the prieſt, that in receiving the euchariſt there is a ſacred difference put between him and the laity, when the laity receive but in one kind? What church has furniſh'd to corrupt men ſo many equivalents of real piety and virtue, with deluſive aſſurances of pardon, as the church of *Rome*? May it not be juſtly ſaid, that whatever claim they have to the character of a true church, they have all the marks of a corrupt one? When repentance, which ſignifies change of mind and conduct, is recommended, the papiſts think proper to uſe the expreſſion of *doing penance*; that the votaries of their church may never looſe the view of the power of the prieſt in abſolving, and of an eaſier way of obtaining pardon by private faſtings, ſaying *pater-noſters*, and *ave-maries*, than by real and extenſive virtue.

But ſince it is proper more particularly to conſider the popiſh doctrines of penance and pilgrimages, by which I mean here,

here, what are injoin'd by the prieſt: give me leave firſt to repreſent them to you; and then ſhew, that theſe are not built upon any firm or ſolid foundation, tho' they are admirably fited to promote the corrupt views of that church.

1. The papiſts define penance to be "A "ſacrament, conſiſting in ſome outward "ſign or ceremony, by which grace is "given to the ſoul of the worthy recei-"ver, inſtituted by Chriſt, when breath-"ing upon his diſciples he gave them "the Holy Ghoſt, to remit and retain "ſins, that is, to reconcile the faithful "fallen into ſin after baptiſm. It differ-"eth from baptiſm not only in the mat-"ter and form, but alſo becauſe the mi-"niſter of baptiſm is not a judge in "that ordinance; whereas after baptiſm "the ſiner preſents himſelf before the "tribunal of the prieſt as guilty, to be "ſet at liberty by his ſentence. It is "however as neceſſary as baptiſm. The "form conſiſts in the words, *I do abſolve* "*thee.* Contrition, confeſſion, and ſatiſ-"faction are parts of penance, and the "effect of it is reconciliation with God. "Contrition is grief of mind for ſin com-

"mited,

" mited, with purpoſe to ſin no more,
" and was ever neceſſary at all times;
" but in ſuch, as ſin after baptiſm, it is
" a preparation to remiſſion of ſins, be-
" ing join'd with a purpoſe to do what-
" ſoever elſe is requir'd for the lawful
" receiving of this ſacrament. By pe-
" nance the church hath ever under-
" ſtood, that Chriſt hath inſtituted the
" intire confeſſion of ſins, as neceſſary
" by the law of God, to thoſe, who fall
" after baptiſm. For having inſtituted
" the prieſts, his vicars, for judges of all
" mortal ſins, it is certain that they can-
" not exerciſe this judgment without
" knowledge of the cauſe; nor obſerve
" equity in impoſing puniſhment, if the
" ſins be not particularly made known
" unto them, and not in general only.
" But when this is done, the prieſt, who
" hath authority delegate or ordinary
" over the penitent, remits his ſins by
" a judicial act. And the greater prieſts
" reſerve to themſelves ſome faults more
" grievous, as does the pope; and there
" is no doubt, but that every biſhop may
" do it in his dioceſs: and this reſerva-
" tion is of force before God. It has been
" allways obſerv'd in the church, that in
" the hour of death any prieſt may ab-

" ſolve

" ſolve any penitent from any ſin. Satiſ-
" factions impoſed by the prieſt" *viz.* of ſaying ſo many *pater-noſters* and *ave-maries*, of lacerating their bodies by ſevere ſcourgings, of going barefoot to the ſhrine of ſome ſaint, *&c.* which are too well known, to require an exact deſcription, " are made neceſſary; ſince it is not con-
" venient, that the offender ſhould be too
" eaſily received into grace; and it is pro-
" per he ſhould be like to Chriſt, who ſuf-
" fering puniſhments, did ſatisfy for us,
" from whom our ſatisfactions alſo re-
" ceive force, as offered by him to the
" Father, and received by his interceſ-
" ſion"†.

To this their doctrine of ſatisfactions it may not be improper to add, that the confeſſors often change ſeverer penances into certain ſums of money, which they exact; and teach, that attrition alone, which, as they define it, is a grief for ſin ariſing either from ſhame, or from a fear of hell, will be ſufficient for obtaining pardon. * A late popiſh writer farther tells us, that " ſince under the law in
" caſe of leproſy, to which ſin may fitly
" enough be compar'd, the leprous per-

* Vid. *Conc. Trid. Seſs. dec. quartâ.*
* See *A profeſſion of Catholick faith*, 1734.

ſon

" ſon was pronounced clean by the prieſt;
" it is no way unreaſonable, that the Chri-
" ſtian prieſt ſhould have a power to
" abſolve." To which he adds, that "this
" doctrine is taught by our church", and cites the following paſſage. " Our Lord
" Jeſus Chriſt, who hath left power to
" his church to abſolve all ſiners, who
" truly repent and believe in him, of his
" great mercy forgive thee thine offen-
" ces; and by his authority commited to
" me, I abſolve thee from all thy ſins, in
" the name of the Father, Son, and of the
" Holy Ghoſt.

2. I proceed now to ſhew, that theſe doctrines of penance and pilgrimages are not built upon any firm and ſolid foundation; tho' they are admirably fited to promote the corrupt views of the church of *Rome*.

The main foundation, upon which the doctrine of penance is built, is the ſuppos'd authority, which Chriſt is imagin'd to inveſt the prieſts with in theſe texts: * *And when he had ſaid this, he breathed on them, and ſaith unto them: Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt. Whoſe ſoever ſins*

* John XX. 22.

ye

ye remit, they are remited to them; and whoſe ſoever ſins ye retain, they are retain'd: † *Verily I ſay unto you, whatſoever ye ſhall bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven; and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven:* I ſhall endeavour therefore, with the utmoſt care I can, to give you the true meaning of theſe paſſages.

As to the firſt, it will be neceſſary to inquire, who the perſons are, to whom the text refers. They are call'd the *diſciples*, * *who in the evening were aſſembled for fear of the Jews.* If by the term *diſciples* we are to take in the hundred and twenty, † this interpretation will not favour the popiſh doctrine; which reſtrains the power of retaining or remiting ſins to the prieſts only; and denounces an *anathema* againſt ſuch, who aſſert, that abſolution is not a judicial, but a miniſterial act, to declare the remiſſion of ſins to the believing penitent. But the words plainly refer to the apoſtles, of whom alone it can be ſaid with propriety, *as my father ſent me, even ſo ſend I you*, or will ſend you in a little time, when the ſpirit ſhall be poured out. As a token of which *he* ‖ *breathed upon them, and ſaith unto them: Receive*

† Mat. XVIII. 18. * Joh. XX. 19. † Acts I. 15. ‖ רוח.

ye the Holy Ghoſt. In the 24th verſe it is ſaid, that *Thomas, one of the twelve call'd Didymus, was not with them, when Jeſus came:* and it follows, *the other diſciples therefore,* that is, the reſt of the apoſtles, *told him, that they had ſeen the Lord.* It appears then evident, that the privilege of remiting or retaining ſins, mentioned in this text, relates to the apoſtles only; who were to be ſent out by Chriſt himſelf, after they were furniſhed with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit for that purpoſe, to preach every where the doctrine of repentance and remiſſion of ſins; and to whom was communicated the power of inflicting, or removing diſeaſes. And I know not how any biſhop or prieſt can lay claim to an authoritative power of remiting or retaining ſins from this text, unleſs he can prove his ſucceſſion to the apoſtolic character. Permit me then to ſhow the ſcripture-characters of an apoſtle, whereby it will clearly appear, that the pretenſion, to be a proper ſucceſſor to an apoſtle, is as groundleſs, as it is arrogant.

* *Am I not an apoſtle? have I not ſeen Jeſus Chriſt our Lord?* The apoſtles being choſen to be witneſſes of the reſurrection,

* 1 Cor. IX. 1.

it

it was requiſite that St. *Paul*, being call'd to that office, ſhould alſo ſee him riſen. Hence *Ananias* ſpeaks thus to him: † *The God of our fathers hath choſen thee, that thou ſhouldeſt ſee the juſt one, and ſhouldeſt hear the words of his mouth; for thou ſhalt be his witneſs to all men, of what thou haſt ſeen* and *heard.* Accordingly we find that Chriſt was ſeen of him: ‖ *And laſt of all he was ſeen of me alſo, as of one born out of due time.* This St. *Paul* ſais, as not having ſeen Chriſt, of whom he was to teſtify, till after his converſion, and our Lords aſcention; as the reſt of the apoſtles had. ‡ *And ye alſo ſhall bear witneſs, becauſe ye have been with me from the begining.* On this account when the vacant apoſtleſhip of *Judas* was to be filled up, care was taken that it ſhould be by one, who had accompanied with the diſciples all the time that the Lord Jeſus went in and out among them, begining from the baptiſm of *John* unto that ſame day, that he was taken up from them; becauſe he was, by being choſen to be an apoſtle, ordain'd to be a witneſs of Chriſt's reſurrection.

Another character of an apoſtle was,

† Acts XXII. 14. ‖ 1 Cor. XV. 8. ‡ John XV. 27.

that from the abundance of extraordinary gifts imparted to him by the effuſion of the Spirit, he was impower'd for the confirming and ſpreading the Goſpel to communicate ſome degrees of the gifts of the Holy Spirit to others by impoſition of hands. **Now when the apoſtles, which were at Jeruſalem, heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they ſent unto them Peter and John, two apoſtles; who when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghoſt (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jeſus) Then they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghoſt. And when Simon ſaw, that through laying on of the apoſtles hands the Holy Ghoſt was given, he offered them money.*

It was peculiar to an apoſtle to inflict upon remarkable offenders, in the firſt ſettlement of the kingdom of the Meſſiah, ſuch extraordinary corporal puniſhments, as might be a terror to others, by the direction and influence of the Holy Ghoſt. Inſtances of this we have in the death inflicted by St. *Peter* on *Ananias* and *Saphira*: † in the blindneſs inflicted by St.

* Acts VIII. 14--17. † Acts V. 10.

Paul

Paul on *Elymas*, ‖ and his delivery of *Hymeneus* and *Alexander* unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaſpheme.*

To the apoſtles was given by the Spirit the word of ‡ *wiſdom*; by which term in many places the whole ſcheme of the Chriſtian doctrine is expreſs'd. And therefore to them only, as deſign'd to be the foundation, on which the Chriſtian faith, worſhip, and practice ſhould be built, by the illumination of the Spirit, was imparted a full and comprehenſive view of the diſpenſation of the Goſpel. They by revelation opened, wherein the pardon of ſin conſiſted, namely in removing the puniſhment, that was the reveal'd ſanction of infringing the divine law, which was death, by a reſurrection to eternal life; ſet in a clear and full light the tetms, upon which this bleſſing would be confer'd, either by innocence, or ſince that dos not appear to be attainable by us in this corrupt and deprav'd ſtate, ſincere and ſteddy (tho' not perfect and faultleſs) obedience; and at the ſame time aſured us, that if theſe conditions were not complyed with, a ſecond death would be in-

‖ Acts XIII. 11. * 1 Tim. I. 20. See 1 Cor. V. 5.
‡ 1 Cor. XII. 8, 28.

flicted,

flicted, and that Chriſt, who is appointed by the Father to be the judge of all, will ratify the doctrine of the apoſtles communicated to them by revelation, in diſpenſing rewards and puniſhments agreably to it.

To bring this part of the argument to a point: Since the text under examination plainly refers to the apoſtles; and the characters laid down in the ſcripture of an apoſtle are ſuch, that neither the biſhop of *Rome*, nor any other, can juſtly pretend to; it follows, that a grant made to the apoſtles cannot fairly and reaſonably be claim'd by any biſhop, or prieſt whatſoever; and that this text muſt be given up, as inſufficient, to ſupport what is built upon it, *viz.* the authorative power of a prieſt, as judge on a tribunal, to abſolve.

But it may be there is greater force in the other text, which is brought to ſupport the popiſh doctrine of penance * *Verily I ſay unto you, whatſoever ye ſhall bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven, and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven.* Let us therefore carefully conſider it. And in order to this, give me leave to ſet before you a brief para-

* Mat. XVIII. 18.

phraſe

phraſe of the preceding part of the chapter. The diſciples at this time forming expectations of Chriſt's erecting a glorious kingdom upon earth, began to conteſt who ſhould be greateſt in that kingdom; till at laſt *Jeſus* taking notice of the diſpute, ſet a little child before them and ſaid: There is a wide defference between the kingdom of God, and the kingdoms of this preſent world; men ſhall not there be exalted, as they are here, by ſtriving for ſuperiority; but they ſhall be eſteem'd only by their humility and freedom from ambitious regards to the things of the world, ſuch as are the qualities of this little child. Whoſoever therefore ſhall come neareſt to the unaffected hnmility of this little child, ſhall be greateſt in the kingdom of heaven; and he that without reſpect to temporal conſiderations ſhall receive and incourage ſuch an humble perſon ſhall be rewarded, as if he had entertain'd me. On the contrary, he that ſhall deſpiſe, injure, or offend any of theſe humble perſons, who believe in me; better were it for him, that he had quickly periſhed by ſome violent death. Such indeed is the ſtate of things, and the wickedneſs of men, that offences will happen, and the providence of God for wiſe reaſons may permit them. But wo be to

that

that man, by whoſe fault they ſhall come to paſs. It may perhaps be a difficult precept to men of ſome diſpoſitions to avoid them: but if any thing as dear to them as a right hand or right eye be the occaſion of injuring one of theſe little ones, it is much better to part with it, whatever difficulty may attend doing ſo, than incur the eternal diſpleaſure of God. Take heed that ye deſpiſe not one of the meaneſt of my diſciples, for whom God has ſo great a concern, as to ſend his angels from his own immediate preſence to miniſter unto him: nay for whoſe ſalvation God has thought fit to have ſent his ſon into the world, and whoſe recovery is pleaſing to the father; as a ſhepherd has ſenſible joy, when he finds one of his ſheep, which had gone aſtray. If thereſore thy brother ſin, or commit a treſpaſs againſt thee; uſe all prudent means to recover him. Firſt, tell him privately of his fault, between thee and him alone; and if he thereby be perſuaded to amend, thou haſt gain'd thy purpoſe, and ſaved thy brother. But if he reject thy private admonition, then take with thee two or three other perſons; that by the authority of theſe witneſſes he may be convinced, and prevail'd with to repent. But if this method alſo prove ineffectual to

reform

reform him, then tell thy caſe to the church; and if he ſtill be ſo obſtinate, as not to be influenced by public reproof, you have done your duty, and you may have no more to do with him in a way of friendſhip and familiarity. Verily I ſay unto you, * whatſoever injury or treſpaſs, taking theſe prudent methods which I have laid down, ye ſhall bind on your offending and incorrigible brother on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven; and whatſoever treſpaſs ye ſhall looſe on earth, by reducing the offender to repentance, in the uſe of the rules I have before preſcribed, and entitling him, agreably to my doctrine, to your forgiveneſs, ſhall be looſed in heaven. Upon this *Peter* ask'd, how oft his brother might ſin againſt him, and he be obliged upon his repenting to forgive him. Now upon this interpretation, which appears agreable to the whole of Chriſt's diſcourſe here, what foundation is there for the authority of the prieſt alone to forgive; eſpecially when there is not the leaſt mention made of the prieſt in the whole paragraph?

Having thus overturn'd the foundation,

d Vid. *Grot. in loc.*

upon which from ſcripture they build the doctrines of penance and injoin'd pilgrimages, the ſuperſtructures, as, that penance is a ſacrament; and the exorbitant powers, which are ſuppoſed to be given to the prieſts; muſt of courſe fall, in the opinion of proteſtants, whoſe religion is ſcripture alone. But when the writers of the church of *Rome* from the pureſt antiquity ſhall produce teſtimonies to prove the doctrine of penance, as it is repreſented in the council of *Trent*, to be moſt antient, it will be no difficult task to make a reply. The argument which a late writer uſes, taken from the prieſts pronouncing under the law the leprous perſon clean, is rather an illuſtration than a proof. However ſince it is borrowed from the law of *Moſes*, which we gentile Chriſtians were never under, and which is now abrogated, it can never be regarded as concluſive. And whereas the ſame author ſais, that their doctrine is allowed by the church of *England*, I leave them to anſwer, who are more nearly concerned in it, than I am.

By what has been offer'd, I think it plainly appears, that the popiſh doctrines of penance and enjoin'd pilgrimages are not built upon any firm and ſolid foundation

dation; however they are admirably fitted to promote corrupt views. What can more gratify the ambition of a prieſt, than to make his authoritative ſentence neceſſary to the forgiving mortal ſins. The words which I refer to are theſe: * " And tho' " contrition be ſometimes join'd with cha- " rity, and reconcileth a man to God be- " fore the receiving of the ſacrament; yet " this virtue cannot be aſcribed to it, " without purpoſe to receive the ſa- " crament of penance." What could create a greater dependance of the people upon the pope, or biſhop of a dioceſs; which ſuits exactly with ambitious aims; than that they ſhould reſerve to themſelves ſome more grievous faults, and that this reſervation ſhould be of force before God? And ſince corrupt men, finding they want a ſettled habit of religious virtue, are deſirous of ſomething in the lieu of it, upon which they may form the hope of future happineſs; what more readily occurs to ſuch, than extraordinary appearances of devotion, ſevere ſcourgings, and pilgrimages to the ſhrine of ſome ſaint, and private faſtings; which becauſe not commanded, they apprehend will be ſooner accepted, as equivalents of real anb ex-

* Vid. *Conc. Trid. Ibid.*

tenſive virtue, which they ſee will put them to more difficulty to attain. But how deluſive are ſuch ſentiments! It is the excellency of the Chriſtian doctrine, that the inſtitutions, which are enjoin'd in it, are few and ſimple; that they who profeſs it might with greater clearneſs ſee, that the laſt deſign of it is to bring us to ſincere piety and real virtue. And can any imagine, that introducing ſuch unſcriptural practices, as bad men may and do take as *ſubſtitutes*, and which are contrary to the wiſe and excellent ſimplicity of the Chriſtian religion, can be pleaſing and grateful to the author of it? Can we ſuppoſe, that a being of unlimited goodneſs can be pleas'd with the ſevere pains, that any of his reaſonable creatures voluntarily inflict upon themſelves, for their own ſake? and if not, why are they undergone? The reaſon is plain: becauſe the enduring them for a little time is much more eaſy, than a conſtant regulation of our appetites and paſſions, a ſteddy practice of piety, and univerſal righteouſneſs and beneficence; and yet theſe are neceſſary to make us like to God, who is invariably holy; to render us ſubjects capable of future happineſs, and to attemper us to heaven, which is to be conſidered by us as a ſtate, as well as a place. How dangerous then muſt it be to

lead

lead ſiners into a falſe and groundleſs expectation of the favor of God and eternal life upon expreſſions of grief, ariſing from ſhame and fear of hell, in the lateſt moments of life; when through long and inveterate habits of vice they are unqualified for the reception of thoſe bleſſings.

IV. Let us therefore be prevail'd upon by this diſcourſe, faithfully to endeavour by frequent and fixed meditation upon the ſpiritual nature of Chriſt's kingdom, and the celeſtial joys it ſets before us, to gain an aſcendant over the world, and be ſuperior to intereſted and ambitious views. Let us take care that we do not raiſe poſitive duties above moral, which are of eternal and immutable obligation, and the end of true religion. And yet let us be careful to obſerve, whatever bears the ſtamp of divine authority. Let us not inſolently make a religion for God, but receive it as he has delivered it to us by reaſon and revelation; nor tamely take one from uninſpired and fallible men. Whenever we are inquiring into the character of a true Chriſtian, let us take the deſcriptions which are laid down by Chriſt and his apoſtles, ſuch as: * *The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-*

* Gal. V. 22.

ſuffering,

ſuffering, *gentleneſs*, *goodneſs*, *faith* [or *fidelity*] *meekneſs*, *temperance*, and the like. Whenever any doctrine is propos'd to us, let us diligently conſider it's tendency to promote true piety, humility, and virtue, or the contrary; and remember that pure Chriſtianity forbids all pretention to dominion over the faith of others, and is a doctrine according to godlineſs. Let us never deſire to be entertain'd rather with ſmooth, than right things; and eſpecially let us carefully guard againſt every criminal biaſs; that when a ſubtle prieſt comes, he may find nothing in us.

I ſhall conclude this diſcourſe with two paſſages of ſcripture, the one taken out of the Old, the other from the New Teſtament. The firſt is: * *Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, the God of Iſrael, amend your ways, and your doings, and I will cauſe you to dwell in this place. Truſt ye not in lying words, ſaying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are theſe. For if ye throughly amend your ways, and your doings; if you throughly execute judgement between a man and his neighbour; if ye oppreſs not the ſtranger, the fatherleſs, and the widow, and ſhed not in-*

* Jer. VII. 3,——10.

nocent

nocent blood in this place, neither walk after other Gods, to your hurt: then will I cauſe you to dwell in this place. Behold, ye truſt in lying words, that cannot profit. Will ye ſteal, murder, and commit adultery, and ſwear falſly, and burn incenſe unto Baal, and walk after other Gods, whom ye know not, and come and ſtand before me in this houſe, which is call'd by my name, and ſay, We are delivered to do all theſe abominations. The ſecond is: **And beſides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godlineſs; and to godlineſs, brotherly kindneſs; and to brotherly kindneſs, charity. If ye do theſe things, ye ſhall never fall. For ſo an entrance ſhall be miniſtred unto you abundantly, into the everlaſting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.*

* 2 Pet. I. 5, 6. *&c.*

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SERMON

PREACH'D AT

SALTERS-HALL,

MARCH 6, 1734-5.

[Price Six-pence.]

The CHURCH *of* ROME's DOCTRINE *and* PRACTISE *with relation to the* WORSHIP *of* GOD *in an* UNKNOWN TONGUE *examin'd,*

IN A

SERMON

PREACHED AT

SALTERS-HALL,

MARCH 6, 1734-5.

By *JOSHUA BAYES.*

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M DCC XXXV.

1 Cor. xiv. 9.

So likewiſe ye, except ye utter with the tongue words eaſy to be underſtood, how ſhall it be known what is ſpoken? for ye ſhall ſpeak into the air.

WHOEVER reads this chapter with care, and without prejudice, cannot, I apprehend, but eaſily obſerve, that a principal deſign of the apoſtle therein is to ſhew, that the worſhip of God in the aſſemblies of Chriſtians, ought to be performed in a language which all that join in it are acquainted with; for he all along repreſents the uſe of an unknown tongue there, as contrary to the very end and deſign of ſuch aſſemblies, and by ſeveral arguments ſhews, not only the impropriety, but the abſurdity of it. And particularly in the words I have

I have now read, he plainly aſſerts, that what is ſpoken by thoſe who officiate therein, ſhou'd be known by ſuch as are preſent; and therefore, that they ought to *utter with the tongue words eaſy to be underſtood*, and that otherwiſe they would *ſpeak into the air*, and what they ſaid would be utterly loſt and unprofitable to thoſe that heard them.

But ſince the days of the apoſtle ſome have riſen up in the world, and thoſe ſuch as make the greateſt pretenſions to religion, even to that degree as to confine it to themſelves, and to exclude all from the hope of ſalvation that are not of their church and communion, who are of a different opinion from his; I mean thoſe of the church of *Rome*, who would have us believe, that it is better to have the worſhip of God performed in an unknown tongue, than in a language which the people are acquainted with.

It may ſeem ſtrange, that any who profeſs a regard to God, and to the welfare of ſouls, ſhould give into an opinion and practice ſo directly contrary to ſcripture and reaſon too. But when we conſider in how many other inſtances they have depraved the worſhip of God, as well as the doctrines of Chriſtianity, we need not ſo much wonder at this, or think it ſtrange that they who have locked up the *ſcriptures*

tures from the laity, and deny them the liberty of reading them in a language they underſtand, ſhould, ſtill the more to confirm them in their ignorance, appoint their *worſhip* to be in an unknown tongue too.

Whether they are in the right in inſiſting on this, or Proteſtants in being unwilling to ſubmit to it, and in deſiring to have their worſhip performed in a language which they are acquainted with, is what I am now to inquire into; and in order to determine this, I ſhall proceed in the following method.

I. I ſhall ſet before you what is the doctrine of the church of *Rome* concerning this matter.

II. I will endeavour to give you ſome account of what St. *Paul* has ſaid concerning it in this chapter.

III. I ſhall conſider what thoſe of the church of *Rome* are wont to alledge in defence of their doctrine and practiſe. And,

IV. I ſhall then ſuggeſt ſome further reaſons why we think it not only inexpedient, but unlawful, to uſe an unknown tongue in the worſhip of God.

I. I am to ſet before you, what is the doctrine of the church of *Rome* concerning this matter. And in order to this, I think it will be ſufficient to refer you to what the *council of Trent* has decreed concerning it, for that is the preſent ſtandard of their doctrine. Now therein it is declared, " That tho' the maſs contain great inſtru- " ction for God's faithful people, yet it " ſeemed not expedient to the fathers, *(i. e.* " of that council) that it ſhould be ce- " lebrated every where in the vulgar tongue; " wherefore retaining in all churches the " ancient rite, (or in all places the ancient " rite of every church) approved by the " holy *Roman* church, the mother and " miſtreſs of all churches, leſt Chriſt's " ſheep ſhould hunger, and the children " aſking bread, none ſhould be found to " break it to them, the holy ſynod com- " mands paſtors and all that have care of " ſouls, that during the celebration of the " maſs, they ſhould frequently by them- " ſelves, or others, expound ſome part of " thoſe things which are read in it; and " among other things, let them expound the " myſtery of the moſt holy ſacrifice, (or " ſome myſtery of this holy ſacrifice) eſpe- " cially on ſundays and feaſts.

And in the next canon they add, " If " any one ſhall ſay, that maſs ought to be " cele-

" celebrated only in the vulgar tongue, let " him be anathema." *

Thus has the council of *Trent* decreed: but that we may have a clearer view of the ſtate of this controverſy between the church of *Rome* and us, it may be proper here to remark a few things, as particularly.

1. That they ſeem to confine it to *publick* worſhip, for they ſpeak of the celebration of the maſs; and ſome of their divines have ſaid concerning *private* worſhip, " That it is lawful for every one to offer " his leſſer prayers to God, in what tongue " ſoever he pleaſes; and that all Catho- " licks are taught to ſay their private pray- " ers in their mother tongue." Tho' I ſee no reaſon why the one ſhould be in an unknown tongue any more than the other, ſince we ought to act from the like principles, and for the ſame ends, and with a like frame and temper of mind in the one as the other. And I am apt to believe, that if this liberty be allowed, it is too ſeldom practiſed, and that it is no uncommon thing for thoſe of their communion to ſay even their *private* prayers in *Latin*, tho' they underſtand nothing of that language.

* Seſſ. 22. c. 8, 9.

2. That by the *vulgar tongue* is meant the language that is commonly ſpoke in any country, and which therefore the inhabitants of it are univerſally acquainted with; as ſuppoſe *Engliſh* in *England*, *Dutch* in *Holland*, *French* in *France*, &c. In this ſenſe it is that we affirm the worſhip of God ought to be in the *vulgar tongue*, i. e. in every country in the language that is commonly uſed there, and ſo univerſally underſtood by the inhabitants of it. But this our adverſaries deny, by appointing their maſs to be in *Latin*, which is now a dead language, and is no where commonly ſpoken or generally underſtood in any part of the world.

3. I would further obſerve, that the council don't ſay it is abſolutely *unlawful* that divine worſhip ſhould be performed in the vulgar tongue, but only that it did not appear to them *expedient* it ſhould be ſo; whereby they ſeem to have reſerved to themſelves a liberty of diſpenſing with this upon proper occaſions; and perhaps they may have done ſo in ſome inſtances, and particularly in Proteſtant countries, the better to gain proſelytes among them. But tho' they ſeem to ſpeak with ſo much tenderneſs, yet at the ſame time they injoin the retaining what they call the "antient rite, ap-" proved by the holy *Roman* church, the

" mother

" mother and miſtreſs of all churches," *i. e.* the *Latin* ſervice; and inſtead of allowing the maſs in the vulgar tongue, only appoint paſtors or others, now and then to explain ſome parts of it to them; which ſhews that if at any time they have diſpenſed with it, and indulged the celebration of it in the vulgar tongue, it has been more from conſtraint than choice; and that it is their opinion and deſire that it ſhould always and every where be celebrated in *Latin*. Yea, ſo very intent were they upon eſtabliſhing this, that tho' it was " earneſtly deſired, and ſtrenuouſly urged " by the Emperor, the King of *France*, " the King of *Poland*, the Duke of *Bava-* " *ria*, &c. that the publick ſervice might " be in a language underſtood by thoſe " that heard it, they could not prevail, " but an *Anathema* is denounced againſt " thoſe that ſay the maſs ought to be " celebrated in the vulgar tongue." * And ſince that time, when ſome in *France* had publiſhed a tranſlation of the Miſſal into *French*, Pope *Alexander* the 7th heavily complains of it, and in a Brief ſent to the clergy of *France* on that occaſion, " ſtiles " the authors of it, ſons of perdition, and " repreſents it as a novelty which he ab- " horred and deteſted as the ſeed-plot of

* Dr. *Stratford*'s Neceſſity of Reformation, Part 2. ch. 3. p. 66.

" diſobedience, raſhneſs, ſedition, and " ſchiſm, and of many other evils; and " therefore that *French* Miſſal, or what " ſhall hereafter be publiſhed in any other " manner, he condemns, reprobates and " forbids."† So that whatever compliance the ſtate of their affairs may now and then put them upon, we ſee they are againſt tranſlations; and I am afraid that if any of the common people ſhould deſire a Bible or a Prayer-Book in the vulgar tongue, in *Spain* or *Italy* or *Portugal*, it would be enough to bring him under the ſuſpicion of hereſy. I ſhall only add under this head, That whereas the council ſays, " That leſt Chriſt's ſheep ſhould hunger, " and the children asking bread, none " ſhould be found to break it to them, " therefore they command paſtors and all " that have care of ſouls, that during the " celebration of the maſs they expound " ſome part of thoſe things that are read " in it;" they herein plainly allow that it is fit the people ſhould underſtand ſomething of what they are about, for otherwiſe why is any part of it ordered to be expounded to them? And yet in the proviſion that is made for this more zeal is ſhewn for their *Latin* ſervice, than kindneſs and concern for them, who ſurely

† Bulla Alex. VII, 1661.

would

would be much more edified by having the inſtructions and prayers contained in it, in a language they underſtand, than they uſually are by the expoſitions which their Prieſts give of them.

Thus we ſee what is the *doctrine* of the church of *Rome*, that they are againſt the uſe of the *vulgar* tongue in *publick* worſhip; and their *practice* is agreeable to it, for it is their cuſtom in all places to celebrate their divine offices in the *Latin* tongue.

II. Let us now ſee what St. *Paul* has ſaid in this chapter, concerning the language which is to be uſed in Chriſtian aſſemblies; and when we conſider this, I doubt not we ſhall eaſily diſcern, that he is ſo far from giving any countenance to our worſhipping God there in an *unknown* tongue, that he very plainly and expreſsly condemns it. That which gave occaſion to what he has delivered in this chapter, was the unbecoming behaviour of ſome in the church of *Corinth*, who being inſpired with the gift of tongues, were too apt to overvalue themſelves upon it, ſo that it became too uſual a practiſe among them to preach and pray and ſing pſalms in languages unknown to their auditory, without ever interpreting what they ſaid, into the vulgar tongue. This the apoſtle

condemns

condemns as an unwarrantable practiſe, and the arguments he makes uſe of to this purpoſe are ſuch as fully ſhew, that the worſhip of God in Chriſtian aſſemblies, ought to be in a language, in which all that are preſent may join, and be profited by it. Particularly he ſhews,

In the firſt place, That the worſhip of God in an unknown tongue is contrary to one great *end* and *deſign* of worſhip, which is, the *edification* and advantage of thoſe that attend upon it. He lays it down as a general rule, *ver.* 26. That in publick aſſemblies all things ſhould *be done to edifying*, and thro' the greateſt part of the chapter he repreſents the inſtruction and advantage of the people, as what ſhould be the principal aim of thoſe who officiate in them. He exhorts indeed the *Corinthians* to *deſire ſpiritual gifts, but rather that they might propheſy*, or be able to interpret the ſcripture, *ver.* 1. And the reaſon of this he aſſigns, *ver.* 2, 3, 4, 5. *For*, ſays he, *he that ſpeaketh in an unknown tongue, ſpeaketh not unto men but unto God, for no man underſtandeth him. But he that propheſieth, ſpeaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He that ſpeaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himſelf, but he that propheſieth edifieth the church. I would that ye all ſpake with tongues, but rather that ye propheſied, for*

greater

greater is he that propheſieth, than he that ſpeaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying. Where he all along goes upon this reaſonable ſuppoſition, that what is not underſtood, can never edify, and conſequently that ſpeaking in an unknown tongue muſt be altogether unprofitable, becauſe it is not underſtood by thoſe that hear it. And hence it is that he afterwards ſays, *ver.* 18, 19. *I thank my God I ſpeak with tongues more than you all, yet in the church I had rather ſpeak five words with my underſtanding, that by my voice I might teach others alſo, than ten thouſand words in an unknown tongue.* From all which it plainly appears, that in the opinion of the apoſtle, preaching or praying in an unknown tongue, is by no means allowable in Chriſtian aſſemblies, becauſe thereby one great end of them is defeated, which is the *edification* of the people.

Again, he repreſents it as *abſurd* in itſelf, for men to ſpeak to others in a language which they are unacquainted with, and which can be of no more uſe to 'em, than if they were wholly ſilent. This he illuſtrates by the ſimilitude of a pipe or harp to thoſe that dance, when they give no diſtinction in the ſounds, and to a trumpet to thoſe who are to prepare for the battle, when it gives an uncertain ſound; in which caſe neither the one nor the other knows how

to

to act. *And*, says he, *v.* 7, 8, 9. *Even things without life, giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise you, except ye utter with the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken?* And he goes on, *v.* 10, 11. *There are, it may be, so many voices in the world, and none of them are without signification. Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a Barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a Barbarian unto me.* Now the plain design of all this is to shew, that as the end of speaking is to be understood, so where this end is not attained, it is all in vain, and to no purpose; and the prayers and praises that are uttered in a language which the people understand not, can be no better than speaking into the air, and abusing them with empty sounds, and must render both him that speaks, and them that hear, *Barbarians* to one another. And as this would be accounted absurd even in common conversation, much more must it be so in the worship of God.

Another argument which the apostle makes use of is, That all who attend in publick assemblies, ought to *join* in the worship

worſhip which is performed there; but that this is render'd impracticable to thoſe who are ſtrangers to the language in which it is performed. This he urges, *v.* 15, 16. Having before directed thoſe who were zealous of ſpiritual gifts, to ſeek that they might excel to the *edifying* of the church; and when they ſpake with an unknown tongue, to pray that they might *interpret*, becauſe without this, *tho' the ſpirit prayed, the underſtanding would be unfruitful*, and what was ſpoken could not be underſtood by thoſe that heard it; he adds, *v.* 15. *What is it then? I will pray with the ſpirit, and will pray with the underſtanding alſo; I will ſing with the ſpirit, and I will ſing with the underſtanding alſo.* Where, tho' he does not forbid their praying or ſinging under a divine *afflatus*, yet he would have them to perform both, ſo that others might underſtand and join with them therein. And *v.* 16. he gives the reaſon of this: *Elſe*, ſays he, *when thou ſhalt bleſs with the ſpirit, how ſhall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned ſay Amen at thy giving of thanks; ſeeing he underſtandeth not what thou ſayeſt?* Where he very plainly ſhews, that all who are preſent in Chriſtian aſſemblies ſhould be able to join in the worſhip performed there; but that they are rendred incapable of this when he who officiates therein, ſpeaks in a language which

they are ignorant of. And ſure both theſe muſt be readily acknowledged by all that allow themſelves to conſider. If Chriſtians have no concern in the worſhip which is performed in publick aſſemblies; if, when the miniſter is employed in prayer, or in confeſſion of ſin, or in rendring praiſes and thankſgivings to God, the people are not at all obliged to join with him therein; to what purpoſe is it that they attend there? they may as well be abſent from, as preſent in ſuch aſſemblies. But if they ought to be there, and to bear a part in the worſhip performed in them, (which the apoſtle here plainly intimates, and our adverſaries themſelves do allow) how is it poſſible they ſhould diſcharge their duty, when the whole of the ſervice is in a language they underſtand not; or, as the apoſtle expreſſeth it, *How ſhall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned ſay Amen, at thy giving of thanks, ſeeing he underſtandeth not what thou ſayeſt? i. e.* How ſhall the body of the people (who are intended by ſuch as occupy the room of the unlearned) declare their conſent to, and concurrence in the prayers and praiſes that are offered to God, when they underſtand not what is ſaid? And if for this reaſon the uſe of an unknown tongue was condemned in the church of *Corinth*, becauſe the unlearned could not join in the prayers and praiſes that were pronounced

pronounced in it, then for the ſame reaſon muſt it be condemned in the church of *Rome*, ſince the common people know as little of their *Latin* ſervice, as they did of inſpired and uninterpreted prayers.

Again, the apoſtle ſhews, That their ſpeaking in unknown tongues in Chriſtian aſſemblies, was *to pervert the end for which the gift of tongues was afforded.* As this was a miraculous gift, ſo a principal end and deſign of it was (in common with other miracles) to confirm the truth of the goſpel, and to perſuade men to embrace the doctrine of it. But tho' it was neceſſary to ſpread Chriſtianity in the world, yet there was no occaſion for the uſe of it among thoſe who were already converted to the Chriſtian faith. This is inſiſted on, *v.* 21, 22. *In the law*, (or the Old Teſtament) ſays he, *it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I ſpeak unto this people, and yet for all that will they not hear me, ſaith the Lord*; which by ſome is interpreted as referring to the obſtinacy of many who perſiſted in their unbelief, tho' ſuch as preached the goſpel to them, had the gift of ſpeaking in languages they had never learn'd, from whence they might be aſſured they had them by divine inſpiration, and therefore that the doctrine they delivered was of God. And hereupon he adds, *Wherefore tongues are for a ſign, not*

to them that believe, but to them that believe not; but propheſying ſerveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe. Wherein he ſhews, that they were of no uſe in Chriſtian aſſemblies, and among thoſe who had embraced the Chriſtian faith, and wanted only to be further inſtructed and eſtabliſhed therein; but that it was *propheſying*, or ſpeaking in their own language, that was more proper for *them*. And if, upon this account, the apoſtle forbids the uſe of ſuch inſpired languages in their ſtated aſſemblies, his reaſoning will be equally ſtrong againſt the uſe of the *Latin* tongue in divine worſhip now; for as *that* can have no pretence to be a ſign to them that believe not, ſince it is not received by inſpiration, but acquired in the uſe of means; ſo neither is it ſuited to the edification of them that believe, ſince it is not generally underſtood by them. Yea further,

The apoſtle repreſents their uſing an unknown tongue in their religious aſſemblies, as what had a tendency to *expoſe* them and their worſhip to the contempt and ridicule of unbelievers, who might happen to come in among them, and ſo confirm them in their infidelity. Whereas, on the other hand, when thoſe who miniſter, inſtead of ſpeaking in an unknown tongue, plainly interpret ſcripture, and ſpeak of the great

great truths of Chriſtianity in a language intelligible and proper, a heathen or unlearned perſon coming in would probably be convinced, and become a convert to it. This argument the apoſtle urges, *v.* 23. *If therefore*, ſays he, *the whole church be come together into one place, and all ſpeak with tongues, and there come in thoſe that are unlearned or unbelievers, will they not ſay you are mad?* Whereby he intimates that they would have juſt reaſon to think ſo; for to what purpoſe do men ſpeak in ſuch aſſemblies, if it is not with a deſign to be underſtood; or with what advantage can others attend upon them, if they underſtand not what is ſpoken? When men are met together for the worſhip of God, and a ſtranger comes in among them to obſerve what they are doing, who hearing only an empty ſound of unintelligible words which he can make nothing of; and upon inquiry of thoſe who by their poſtures and geſtures ſeem to be very devout in it, ſhould find, that neither do they underſtand any thing of what is ſaid; would he not hereupon be tempted to look upon them rather as a company of men out of their wits, than as a worſhipping aſſembly? And if, at that time, the ſpeaking with tongues in Chriſtian aſſemblies, which were not underſtood by the people, was in the apoſtle's opinion a reproach upon religion, and

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tended to prejudice men againſt it; may not this with equal reaſon be ſaid of the *Romiſh Latin* Service, which is no more underſtood by the generality of thoſe that join in it, than thoſe were then? But, as he goes on, *ver.* 24, 25. *If all propheſy, and there come in one that believeth not, or is unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all. And thus are the ſecrets of his heart made manifeſt, and ſo falling down on his face he will worſhip God, and report that God is in you of a truth.* When they that miniſter in holy things ſpeak in a language underſtood by all, and in a manner becoming the ſolemnity and importance of what they are about; this is a proper means of keeping up the credit of religion, and of perſuading men to embrace it.

I ſhall only add in the laſt place, That to give the greater force to all that he had ſaid, the apoſtle aſſures us in the cloſe of his diſcourſe on this ſubject, *That the things which he had written*, to the *Corinthians*, *were the commandments of the Lord*; and that no true prophet, or any one really inſpired, durſt deny it. He ſharply rebukes thoſe Chriſtians for the diſorder and confuſion they had brought into Chriſtian aſſemblies, *ver.* 36. and then adds, *ver.* 37. *If any man think himſelf to be a prophet, or ſpiritual, let him acknowledge that the things*

things that I write unto you, are the commandments of the Lord. And ſure this is a conſideration that ſhould ſilence all objections, and be of greater weight and authority with us than the council of *Trent*'s decree. But,

III. I proceed to conſider what thoſe of the church of *Rome* are wont to alledge in defence of their *doctrine* and *practiſe*. And here I ſhall firſt take notice of what they urge to evade the force of the apoſtle's reaſoning in this chapter, and from whence they would ſhew that it does not conclude againſt them. And then I ſhall conſider ſome further pleas they make uſe of to ſupport their unreaſonable practiſe of celebrating the worſhip of God, in a language which is not underſtood by the common people.

There are ſeveral things which they urge to evade the force of the apoſtle's reaſoning in this chapter, the chief of which are drawn from an imagined *difference* in the caſe which he refers to, from what it is now. Of this they endeavour to produce ſeveral inſtances, from whence they would infer, that what he ſays, does not affect them.

They pretend, " That the apoſtle does " not ſpeak of their ſtated aſſemblies for " publick worſhip, but of ſome more pri-

" vate

" vate conferences, or ſpiritual exerciſes,
" in which they were wont to edify one
" another when the publick worſhip was
" over."

But in anſwer to this: Tho' it ſhould be allowed that ſuch exerciſes were in uſe among them, and that the apoſtle might have ſome regard to them; yet that he ſpeaks *only* of theſe, is ſo far from being true, that I think the contrary muſt be evident to any one that reads his diſcourſe without prejudice; for it is plain from *ver.* 23, and 28. that he ſpeaks of ſuch exerciſes as were performed in the publick aſſembly, and *when the whole church was come together into one place.* Beſides, if in ſuch leſſer aſſemblies they were to uſe a language which was underſtood by all preſent, and not to ſpeak in an unknown tongue, unleſs there were ſome to interpret, then certainly they muſt be equally obliged to do this, when they were met together in more publick and ſolemn aſſemblies; and the reaſon which the apoſtle aſſigns for it, that *all things ſhould be done to edifying*, muſt be as ſtrong, yea ſtronger in this caſe than in the other.

They further pretend, " That the apo-
" ſtle in this chapter only forbids the uſe of
" ſuch languages in the worſhip of God,
" as were *miraculous* and inſpired, and un-
" derſtood by none preſent, any more than

" *Perſic*

" *Perſic* or *Arabic* would be by us now ; " but that he does not ſpeak of thoſe that " are acquired by ſtudy, and are com- " monly underſtood by ſome in all places." This is an argument much inſiſted on by many of their writers ; but as it is precarioufly ſaid, and without any proof, ſo the weakneſs of it will eaſily appear, if we conſider,

That tho' its true he ſpeaks of ſuch languages as were *miraculous*, and which they had the gift of by inſpiration, yet he does not condemn the uſe of them, becauſe they were *miraculous*, but becauſe they were *unknown*, and not underſtood by thoſe that attended there ; by which means he that ſpoke, did but ſpeak into the *air*, and was a *Barbarian* to them ; what he ſaid was altogether unprofitable ; and they could not ſay *amen* to his prayer or bleſſing. And if this was the reaſon why he forbids the uſe of them, as it appears to be from the whole ſcope of his diſcourſe, then his prohibition muſt be underſtood as extending to any other language, which tho' it be acquired, yet is unknown to the generality of thoſe who make up Chriſtian aſſemblies. Beſides,

Tho' the *Latin* tongue be more known now, than thoſe languages might be which were then ſpoken by inſpiration, yet it is no where a *living* language, or generally

underſtood by the inhabitants of any country, no not at *Rome* itſelf; and therefore to the greateſt part of mankind it muſt be an unknown tongue, and as ſuch the uſe of it in the publick worſhip of God, is condemned by the apoſtle in this chapter. "They would indeed perſuade us, that the "apoſtle ſpeaks only of barbarous tongues "and ſuch as were wholly unknown to "them that heard them, but not of thoſe "which were underſtood by learned and "civil people in every great city, as *Latin* "is." But thus to explain the apoſtle, is in reality to contradict him; for it is evident from the whole tenor of his diſcourſe, that he would have divine worſhip performed in a language which is underſtood by the *unlearned* as well as the *learned*, and by the meaneſt as well as the more polite in every place; and particularly from *ver.* 16. where he ſays, *Elſe when thou ſhalt bleſs with the ſpirit, how ſhall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned ſay Amen to thy giving of thanks, ſeeing he underſtandeth not what thou ſayeſt.* I know that by him that *occupieth the room of the unlearned*, they would underſtand one that *ſupplied* the place, and was to anſwer in the *ſtead* of thoſe that were unlearned. But beſides that there was no ſuch cuſtom at that time. and that every one was to ſay *amen* for himſelf, this ſenſe of the expreſſion is ſo contrary

trary to the plain meaning of the original words, that *Bellarmine* himſelf rejects it, and ſays, " That they don't ſignify one " that acts for, or inſtead of the idiot " and unlearned, but one that ſits in the " place of ſuch, and is himſelf unlearned." And as the ſenſe which they would put upon the apoſtle's deſign in this chapter, is very *unjuſt*, ſo methinks it is very *uncharitable* too, ſince it excludes the far greateſt part of thoſe who uſually make up Chriſtian aſſemblies from joining in the worſhip performed in them. If it be of no uſe to underſtand what is ſaid in the duties of divine worſhip, why are they not performed in a language unknown to the learned as well as the unlearned, why not in *Perſic* or *Arabic* as well as *Latin?* But if it be of uſe, as unqueſtionably it is, what right have the learned to it above the unlearned, and why may not theſe inſiſt upon it as their privilege, as well as the other? If the unlearned are obliged to worſhip God as well as the learned, then ſure it would be much more charitable to have their prayers in the vulgar tongue which both are acquainted with, than in *Latin*, which is underſtood only by a few.

Another pretence whereby they would evade the force of the apoſtle's reaſoning in this chapter, is drawn from the different caſe of Chriſtians now, from what it was

at that time, from whence they would infer, That tho' *then* it might be proper to have their publick ſervices in a known tongue, yet there is not the like occaſion for it *now*. They would have it that the rules which the apoſtle here lays down, were only temporary and ſuch as ſuited the condition of the church at that time, but that the ſtate of the church being ſince altered, they are now no longer to be obſerved. And if we inquire wherein the difference lies between thoſe days and the preſent, they tell us, that Chriſtians then were weak in the faith, and very ignorant of the principles of Chriſtianity, and therefore they ſtood in need of being inſtructed and edified, and to that end it was proper that the offices of religion ſhould be performed in a language which they underſtood; but that now they are ſo well inſtructed in religion, and eſtabliſhed in the faith, that they have no need of further inſtruction and edification. This is alledged by ſeveral of their writers, and particularly by *Harding* the Jeſuit in his controverſy with Biſhop *Jewel*.* Sure it is a ſign they are put to very hard ſhifts, when they can uſe ſuch an argument as this to ſupport their cauſe. When we compare the primitive Chriſtians with thoſe of after-

* Art. 3. Sect. 30.

ages,

ages, or at the preſent day, I am apt to believe we ſhall all be ready to conclude, that the preference, both in point of knowledge and faith ought to be given to the former; and I think we have very good reaſon for it, ſince we find the apoſtle in all his epiſtles giving ſo great commendations of them, and particularly giving thanks to God on the behalf of the Chriſtians of *Corinth*, *for the grace of God which was given them by Jeſus Chriſt, that in every thing they were enriched by him in all utterance and in all knowledge, ſo that they came behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.** Now this being the character of thoſe Chriſtians, I think we may appeal to the divines of the *Romiſh* church themſelves, whether they can pretend that thoſe of their communion do excel or even equal the Chriſtians in the apoſtle's days. Perhaps in ſome ſort they may ſeem to do ſo in point of *faith*; for being taught to believe as the church believes, and to receive all her doctrines and deciſions implicitly, without ever inquiring into the grounds and reaſons of them, when they are once brought to this, they may ſtand in little need of any further improvement. But if they were to be inquired into as to their *knowledge* in the doctrines

* Chap. i. 4, 5, 7.

of

of Chriſtianity, I fear it would ſoon appear that they have made no ſuch progreſs therein, as to be above the need of further inſtruction. And if the fact upon which they found the difference between the primitive Chriſtians, and thoſe in their communion, be not true, then the inference they would draw from it muſt be wrong. And indeed, I doubt not it will hold much ſtronger the other way, and that we may with much better reaſon conclude, That ſince the apoſtle thought a known tongue in the worſhip of God was neceſſary for the Chriſtians of that age, it muſt be much more ſo in our day.

Beſides this plea which they make uſe of ſuppoſes or allows, that where Chriſtians are weak in faith, and but of little knowledge in religion, (which they would have to be the caſe of Chriſtians in the apoſtle's days) it is fit they ſhould have the offices of religion in a language they underſtand; which is in effect to give up the cauſe, ſince in all places there are ſome ſuch to be found; and yet even this is contrary to their ordinary practiſe, and what they don't allow in any country, no not among the *Indians* themſelves.

Again, they urge as a further inſtance of the difference between thoſe prayers and praiſes which the apoſtle ſpeaks of in this chapter, and thoſe which are contained in their liturgy, " That the principal end of

" the

" the former was the inſtruction and edi-
" fication of the people, which end could
" not be attained, unleſs they were ſpoken
" in a known tongue, or afterwards in-
" terpreted; but that the chief end of di-
" vine offices is not the inſtruction and
" conſolation of the people, but the wor-
" ſhip of God." Thus *Bellarmine* ſays, *
and the *Rhemiſts* to the ſame purpoſe,
" That prayers are not made to teach,
" make learned, or increaſe knowledge,
" tho' by occaſion they ſometimes inſtruct;
" but their ſpecial uſe is, to offer up our
" hearts, deſires, and wants to God." †

But the anſwer to this is eaſy and obvious, that what they aſſert is not true in itſelf, and therefore what they would infer from it, muſt fall to the ground. They affirm that the *principal* end of thoſe religious exerciſes which the apoſtle ſpeaks of, was the inſtruction and conſolation of the people. But this is ſaid without any proof, and contrary to the nature and deſign of all religious aſſemblies, the principal end of which is to worſhip God, or to pay their homage and ſervice to him. And if this be the chief end of all ſuch aſſemblies, why ſhould it not be allowed to be ſo of thoſe which are referred to in this chapter? Again, when they ſay, That the principal end of divine offices is not the inſtruction

* De verbo, L. 2. c. 16.
† Annot. on 1 *Cor.* xiv. p. 545.

and

and conſolation of the people, but the worſhip of God; they ſeem to inſinuate, that the inſtruction and conſolation of the people is no end at all of them, or ſo very inconſiderable, that it need not be intended; to aſſert which is contrary both to ſcripture and reaſon too. Thus in this argument they oppoſe thoſe ends to each other, which are not only very conſiſtent, but ought never to be ſeparated. No doubt but the worſhip of God, and our paying our homage to him, is the firſt and *principal* end of all the inſtitutions of religion, and what ſhould be chiefly aimed at in all our attendances upon them; but then the inſtruction and edification of the people is a *ſecondary* and ſubordinate end of them, and to which a regard is always to be had in the uſe of them, as the apoſtle expreſsly ſhews throughout the whole of this chapter; and therefore unleſs it could be proved that either the inſtruction of the people is no end of divine offices, or that the worſhip is compleat, tho' that end be not regarded or attained, the argument is of no force; for if it be an end, and the ſervice defective where that end is not purſued, then its being only a ſubordinate, and the other the principal end, will by no means juſtify the uſe of an unknown tongue, which muſt render it altogether unedifying to them.

Thus

Thus I have conſidered the principal of thoſe pleas which the Popiſh writers are wont to urge to evade the force of the apoſtle's arguments in this chapter, for the uſe of a *known* tongue in the publick worſhip of God; and, upon the whole, I hope it appears, that notwithſtanding what they have to ſay, he was ſo far from countenancing the doctrine and practiſe of the church of *Rome*, that he expreſsly condemns it. But before I diſmiſs this head, there is one thing more which I muſt not omit to take notice of, which is, that finding themſelves preſſed with the ſtrength of his reaſoning, they have found out a ſhort way of anſwering him, and that is, by oppoſing the authority of their church to his authority, yea to that of God himſelf. St. *Paul* has ſaid, *v.* 37. that the things which he had written were *the commandments of the Lord*; but, ſay they, "The "church does not at all offend in depart- "ing from this inſtitution of St. *Paul*, it "being left free to the church, not only "to violate this inſtitution of St. *Paul*, but "alſo the inſtitutions of God himſelf, ſup- "poſing them to have been once profit- "able to the church, but now unprofit- "able." This is expreſsly ſaid by one of their authors; * and this argument of the

* Hoffmeſt. in 1 *Cor.* xiv. p. 272.

church's authority is largely inſiſted on by Dr. *Cole*, at a diſputation held before the lords at *Weſtminſter*, in the beginning of Q. *Elizabeth*'s reign. * And if they were able to make good their claim to this exorbitant power and authority, I own this would be a full anſwer, and we ſhould be obliged to ſubmit to them, not only in this, but in every other inſtance wherein they have corrupted the worſhip of God. But if it appears that the church has no ſuch power as this, I hope we may ſtill abide by what the apoſtle has ſaid, not meerly as his own opinion, but as the mind of our Lord Jeſus. We are aſſured of *his* commiſſion and inſpiration, but we have no ſuch evidence of the authority and infallibility of the *Pope and his Council*, as to oblige us to ſubmit to their deciſions, eſpecially when they are directly contrary to thoſe of our bleſſed Saviour and his apoſtles; but the weakneſs of the church's pretence to any ſuch authority has been ſo fully ſhewn in a former diſcourſe in this place, that there can be no need for me to inſiſt upon it. †

I now proceed to conſider ſome further arguments which they urge in defence of

* See Collection of Records, at the end of Biſhop *Burnet's Hiſtory of the Reformation*, N°. 4.

† Mr. *Smyth*'s Sermon.

their

their *Latin* ſervice: And here I chuſe to take notice of thoſe which I find in a *Catechiſm* that has been lately publiſhed, and is cautiouſly diſtributed to ſuch as they would draw into their communion; and which therefore we may ſuppoſe contains ſuch reaſons for it as they chiefly rely upon, or which they think will be moſt likely to impreſs the minds of thoſe they deal with. Therein this queſtion is propoſed, "Why "do the church celebrate the maſs in *La*-"*tin*, which the people, for the moſt part, "does not underſtand?" And to this they have four things to anſwer.

Firſt, Becauſe "it is the ancient lan-"guage of the church, uſed in the pub-"lick liturgy in all ages, in the Weſtern "parts of the world." To which I anſwer,

That if it was uſed in the *Weſtern*, it was otherwiſe in the *Eaſtern* parts of the world, for there the *Greek* language was uſed, as being commonly underſtood; and even at this day where there are, in thoſe parts, any churches remaining, who profeſs the Chriſtian religion, they have their publick worſhip in their own language, as is owned by ſome of the Popiſh writers, and particularly concerning the *Armenians*, *Ethiopians*, *Ruſſians*, and others. Again,

It does not appear, that even in all the Weſtern parts of the world, their publick

offices have *in all ages* been in the *Latin* tongue; for tho' it might be ſo in the earlier ages of the church, yet in later times it has been otherwiſe; and particularly we are aſſured that in the 9th century the *Bohemians* had their publick ſervice in the *Slavonian* tongue, which was the common language of their country, and that by the allowance of the *Pope* himſelf; and that this continued for ſome ages. *.

But tho' it ſhould be allowed that the *Latin* tongue has been generally uſed in their publick liturgy in the *Weſtern* parts of the world, it will not from thence follow that it ſhould always be retained and inſiſted on. I own that it was for ſome ages uſed there, as the *Greek* was in the *Eaſtern*; but then it was when that language was in common uſe in thoſe places, and generally underſtood by the inhabitants of them. *Origen* ſays, " That the *Grecians* in their " prayers uſe the *Greek*, and the *Romans* " the *Latin* tongue; and ſo every one ac- " cording to his language, prayeth to God " and praiſeth him as he is able." † And *Bellarmine* himſelf grants, " That not on- " ly in the times of the apoſtles, all the " people were wont to anſwer in divine " offices, (and therefore muſt underſtand

* *Æneas Sylvius* Hiſt. *Bohem.* c. 13.

† Lib. contra Celſum, p. 402.

" the

" the language in which they were per-
" formed) but that the ſame was a long
" time after obſerved both in the *Eaſtern*
" and *Weſtern* church, as is evident from
" *Chryſoſtom*, *Jerom*, *&c.*" But their being in *Latin* then, when that language was common, is no good reaſon why they ſhould continue to be ſo, when it is become a *dead* language, and underſtood by very few in any country, as it has now been for many ages. Whatever preſcription it may plead, yet being now an unknown tongue, and the generality of men, by being obliged to the uſe of it, rendered incapable of worſhipping God with underſtanding; ſure it is highly fit it ſhould be laid aſide. But this is a favour which the church of *Rome* is very unwilling to grant, for tho' (as I hinted before) it had been allowed to the *Bohemians* by Pope *John* the VIIIth; yet two hundred years after, *Gregory* the VIIth wrote to *Uratiſlaus* of *Bohemia*, that he could not permit the celebration of divine offices in the *Slavonian* tongue; and he commanded that prince to oppoſe the people therein with all his forces. * Upon which archbiſhop *Tillotſon* juſtly remarks, " It ſeems
" he thought it a cauſe worth fighting for,
" and that it were better the people ſhould

* *Brent*'s Tranſlation of F. *Paul*'s Hiſt. of the Council of *Trent*, p. 540.

" be

" be killed, than ſuffered to underſtand " their prayers."

A 2d reaſon why their maſs is in *Latin*, tho' the moſt part of the people don't underſtand it, is, " For a greater uniformity " in the publick worſhip, that ſo a Chriſtian in whatſoever country he chances " to be, may ſtill find the liturgy performed in ſuch a manner, and in the " ſame language to which he is accuſtomed " at home." To this I reply,

That I ſee not of what great importance it is that an exact *uniformity* in the publick worſhip of God ſhould be obſerved in all countries; but ſuppoſe that it may be duly and acceptably performed, tho' ſomewhat different rites and cuſtoms ſhould be uſed in different places. And this the church of *Rome* itſelf allows; for in the 4th general council of *Lateran* it is decreed, " That " becauſe in moſt parts within the ſame " city and dioceſe, people of divers languages are mixed, having with one faith " divers rites and cuſtoms, we ſtrictly " charge that the biſhops of ſuch cities and " dioceſes provide fit men, who according " to the diverſity of their rites and " tongues, may celebrate to them divine " offices, and miniſter the eccleſiaſtical ſacraments, inſtructing them both by word " and example." * But ſuppoſing it to be

* Concil. Lat. c. 9.

of

of ſome importance, yet I think it is of much greater that the people ſhould be allowed to underſtand what they do in the ſolemn acts of religion; and as a learned perſon ſays, "That it is very unreaſonable "that for the ſake of a few that travel, "the many that ſtay at home ſhould be "left deſtitute, and for one man's conve-"nience ten thouſand be expoſed to eter-"nal perdition." * Here I cannot forbear tranſcribing a paſſage of the late archbiſhop *Tillotſon*, who having repreſented the Papiſts as ſaying, "That it is *convenient* "that God ſhould be ſerved and worſhipped in the ſame language all the world "over; replies, *Convenient* for whom? For "God, or for the *people?* Not for *God* "ſurely, for he underſtands all other languages as well as *Latin*, and for any "thing we know to the contrary, likes "them as well; and certainly it cannot be "ſo convenient for the *people*, becauſe they "generally underſtand no language but "their own; and it is very inconvenient "they ſhould not underſtand what they "do in the ſervice of God. But perhaps "they mean it is convenient for the *Ro-"miſh* church to have it ſo, becauſe this "will look like an argument that they are

* Biſhop *Williams*.

"the

" the *Catholick* or univerſal church, when " the language which was originally theirs, " ſhall be the univerſal language in which " all nations ſhall ſerve God; and by this " means alſo they may bring all nations to " be of their religion, and yet make them " never the wiſer. And this is a very great " *convenience*, becauſe knowledge is a trou- " bleſome thing, and ignorance very quiet " and peaceable, rendering men fit to be " governed, and unfit to diſpute." *

Another reaſon which they offer why their maſs is celebrated in *Latin*, is " to " avoid the changes which all vulgar lan- " guages are daily expoſed to." But me-thinks here it may ſuffice to ſay, that ſure the remedy is much worſe than the diſeaſe; for the inconveniences that may ariſe from any changes which vulgar languages are ſubject to, are ſmall and inconſiderable in compariſon of the damage which men muſt ſuſtain by being obliged to worſhip God in a language they are wholly ſtrangers to. Beſides, to urge this as a reaſon for their *Latin* ſervice, is in effect to give up the cauſe, for it goes on the ſuppoſition that vulgar languages, by the changes which they are ſubject to, may in time become *unintelligible*; and if this be a reaſon

* *Tillotſon*'s Works, folio, Vol. 1. p. 277.

why

why they ſhould not be uſed in divine worſhip, then ſurely it holds much ſtronger againſt the *Latin* tongue, which is already ſo, to the greateſt part of men in all places.

The fourth and laſt reaſon which they urge for having their maſs in *Latin*, is, "That the maſs being a ſacrifice which the "prieſt as miniſter of Chriſt is to offer, "and the prayers of the maſs being moſt-"ly fitted for this end; it is enough that "they be in a language which he (*i. e.* "the prieſt) underſtands. Nor, ſay they, "is this any ways injurious to the people, "who are inſtructed to accompany him "in every part of this ſacrifice by prayers "accommodated to their devotion, which "they have in their ordinary prayer-books." Anſwer,

Whether or no the maſs be a ſacrifice which the prieſt as miniſter of Chriſt is to offer, is not my buſineſs here to inquire. But tho' it ſhould be ſo, and the prayers of the maſs be moſtly fitted for that end, yet I ſee not why upon that account it ſhould be *ſufficient* that the prieſt underſtands them; for if the people have any concern in the ſervice he is performing, I ſhould think they, as well as he, ſhould underſtand what he is doing. And this they themſelves ſeem to allow when they

ſay, that the people are inſtructed to accompany him in every part of the ſacrifice by prayers accommodated to their devotion, which they have in their ordinary prayer-books. And if they ought to underſtand what he is doing, I cannot but think they are *injurious* to them, in concealing the ſervice from them in a language they are unacquainted with, and only referring them to their ordinary prayer-books for their direction.

And now having given you an account of what the apoſtle has ſaid concerning the uſe of an unknown tongue in the publick worſhip of God, and alſo ſhewn the weakneſs of what our adverſaries are wont to alledge to evade the force of his arguments, and to ſupport their practiſe of celebrating divine offices in a language which the people are generally ſtrangers to, I think we have already ſufficient ground to conclude that this their practiſe is not only *inexpedient* but *unlawful* too. But I propoſed,

IV. More directly to prove this, and I think we can have no reaſon to doubt of it, if we conſider,

In the firſt place, that it is contrary to *ſcripture*, which is the great rule to direct us how we are to worſhip God. This in

ſome

ſome meaſure appears from what has been already ſaid, and might be more fully and diſtinctly repreſented, if I had time.

Tho' *reaſon* tells us that God is to be worſhipped, yet it is chiefly from the *ſcriptures* that we are to learn how we may worſhip him in an acceptable manner. But the directions which are therein given us for this purpoſe, are rendred impracticable by obliging men to worſhip in a language they underſtand not. Therein we are directed to pray and praiſe with *underſtanding* *, and to draw near to God with a *true heart* †; and to lift up our *hearts* with our hands to God in the heavens ‡, and to pray in *faith* ||, in a humble dependance on the promiſes of God, thro' the merit and mediation of our Lord Jeſus, for our acceptance with him. But how is it poſſible that theſe and ſuch like directions can be obſerved, and the ends of worſhip ſufficiently attained, when men are utter ſtrangers to the language in which it is performed? It is to me an impoſition upon the common ſenſe of mankind to ſuppoſe, that our *underſtandings* can be imployed, or our *hearts* engaged, or that *faith* can be duly exerciſed, when we know not the meaning

* Ver. 15. Pſalm xlvii. 7. † Heb. x. 21.
‡ Lam. iii. 41. || Jam. i. 6.

of the words we make uſe of. If it be ſaid, that if the people come with an intention to ſerve God, and do exerciſe a general devotion, *that* is accepted, tho' they do not particularly underſtand the prayers that are made; I anſwer: This is more than they have any warrant to ſay. How far it may be accepted in thoſe who are taught to believe it, and know no better, I will not pretend to determine; but it is plain that ſuch a general devotion does by no means come up to what the ſcriptures require of us, and therefore they act a very ill part in making it neceſſary for them to take up with it.

Beſides, The uſe of an unknown tongue in the worſhip of God, is contrary to the *practiſe of the primitive church*, yea of all Chriſtian churches for many ages. This has been ſo clearly proved by our Proteſtant writers in this controverſy, that I need not now inſiſt upon it.* Yea ſo full and ſtrong are the evidences of it, that many of their own authors have been forced to acknowledge it. And if the worſhip of God in the common and vulgar tongue was the practiſe of our bleſſed ſaviour and his apoſtles, and of Chriſtians for many hundred years after their days, I ſee not what right the church

* Biſhop *Williams*'s diſcourſe on the worſhip of God in an unknown tongue, — and a Treatiſe in confutation of the *Latin* ſervice practiſed in the church of *Rome*.

of

of *Rome* had to alter it, or with what face they can deny men this privilege, when they have neither ſcripture nor antiquity to ſupport them in it.

Yea I add further, that the worſhip of God in an unknown tongue, is contrary to *reaſon*, and what our own minds if duly attended to, muſt tell us, is not a *reaſonable ſervice*. And here I think I may appeal to every man who will allow himſelf to judge impartially, Who is there that has any juſt conceptions of God himſelf, but muſt conclude, that ſuch a worſhip is neither fit for us to offer, nor for him to accept? It is not fit for us to offer, who as reaſonable creatures are ſuppoſed to act reaſonably, and therefore to underſtand what we are about, eſpecially in ſo ſolemn an action. Nor is it fit for God to accept from us, who as he has endued us with underſtanding, and will and affections, ſo has a right to expect that theſe ſhould be imployed in his ſervice; and when they are not, may he not reject it with diſdain, and ſay as he did to his people of old in another caſe, *Offer it now to thy governour, will he be pleaſed with thee, or accept thy perſon?**

And thus I hope it appears, that the practiſe of the *Romiſh* church, in obliging

* Mal. i. 8.

men

men to worſhip God in an unknown tongue, is *unlawful*, as well as *inexpedient*.

And now to cloſe all in a few words,

Let us bleſs God for the *Reformation*, one happy effect of which was, the reſtoring us to the uſe of our bible, and to the privilege of worſhipping God in our own language; and let us be thankful for all the kind appearances of his providence in favour of theſe nations, whereby both our civil and religious liberties have been ſecured and handed down to us, notwithſtanding the reſtleſs efforts of our enemies, to deprive us of them, and we have now the hope and proſpect of having them long continued. And,

Let us pity the caſe of thoſe who are deprived of theſe great and ineſtimable bleſſings, who are denied the free uſe of the ſcriptures, and are obliged to perform their publick worſhip in a language unknown to them, whereby it is rendred very difficult, if not impoſſible for them to perform it in a right manner; and while they are taught that there is no ſalvation out of their church, are denied the very beſt means of ſalvation in it.

And as we are enjoying theſe privileges, let us take care to make a due improvement of them. Let us endeavour to be well acquainted

quainted with the *ſcriptures*. This, among other advantages we ſhall gain by it, will be our beſt defence againſt the errors of *Popery*; for whatever the church of *Rome* may pretend, the greateſt part of their religion has no foundation there. And in all our attendances on God in the duties of his worſhip, let us take care to behave with a ſuitable frame and temper of mind, remembring that *He is a ſpirit, and will be worſhipped in ſpirit and truth*, * and can have no pleaſure in thoſe who *draw nigh to him with their lips, while their hearts are far from him.* †. This is a behaviour very unbecoming in any who profeſs to worſhip God; but it will be more inexcuſable in us who are allowed the privilege of our *own* language, than in thoſe who are obliged to worſhip in an *unknown* tongue.

* John iv. 24. † Mark vii. 6.

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The popiſh doctrine of auricular confeſſion and prieſtly abſolution conſidered.

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT

SALTERS-HALL,

MARCH 13, MDCCXXXIV.

By *JOSEPH BURROUGHS.*

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JOHN XX. 21, 22, 23.

Then ſaid Jeſus to them again, Peace be unto you; as my Father hath ſent me, even ſo ſend I you. And when he had ſaid this, he breathed on them, and ſaith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt; whoſeſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whoſeſoever ſins ye retain, they are retained.

THE province aſſign'd to me is to treat of *auricular confeſſion* and *prieſtly abſolution:* the former of which is one of the firſt things required in the Romiſh *ſacrament of penance*, and the other the completion of it. I have choſen for the foundation of my diſcourſe that text, on which the greateſt ſtreſs is laid with regard to the power of abſolution: and this will naturally bring in all thoſe things which are preparatory to it.

In my diſcourſe I propoſe,

I. To ſet forth, from authentic records, the doctrine of the church of *Rome* on theſe heads.

II. To examine the ground upon which they herein proceed.

I. To ſet forth, from authentic records, the doctrine of the church of *Rome* on the heads of *auricular confeſſion* and *prieſtly abſolution.*

Now nothing can be more authentic in this caſe than the council of *Trent.* And this council declares concerning the ſacrament of penance in general; * 'That our Lord then chiefly inſtituted it, when being raiſed from the dead he *breathed on his diſciples, ſaying, Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt; whoſeſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted to them; and whoſeſoever ye retain, they are retained.* In which ſo remarkable a fact and in ſo clear expreſſions *(they affirm)* the power of remitting and retaining ſins, in order to the reconciling of the faithful, who have lapſed after baptiſm, was communicated to the apoſtles and their legitimate ſucceſſors.' It is plain, that they here aſcribe to *the apoſtles and their legitimate ſucceſſors*, (who in the 6th chap. of the ſame ſeſſion are explained to be *biſhops and prieſts)* the power of *remitting and retaining ſins* in the literal ſenſe. For † they ſpeak of *penance* as 'a ſacrament appointed for the remiſſion of ſins; a remedy of life to thoſe who after baptiſm ſhould deliver up themſelves into the ſlavery of ſin and power of the devil; by which ſacrament *(they ſay)* the benefit of Chriſt's death is applied to thoſe who lapſe after baptiſm.' And, to make the matter fully clear, they frankly acknowledge; ‡ 'that the form of the ſacrament of penance, in which chiefly its force lies, conſiſts in thoſe words of the

* Concil. Trident. Seſſ. XIV. cap. 1. † Ibid.
‡ Cap. 3.

'the minister, *I absolve thee*; and that the 'prayers, which according to the custom of 'holy church are laudably added, do not at all 'belong to the essence of the form, *(they are the council's own words)* 'nor are necessary to the 'administration of the sacrament itself.'

Having thus laid the foundation of their sacrament in priestly absolution; they make no doubt to build upon it the necessity of confession to the priest, in order to his granting the absolution desired. For they affirm; * 'that in the 'very institution of this sacrament of penance, 'as before explained, there was likewise institu-'ted by our Lord an intire confession of sins: 'and that such confession is *jure divino* necessary 'to all those who fall into sin after baptism; 'because, (if you will take their word for it) 'our Lord Jesus Christ, when he was going to 'ascend from earth to heaven, left the priests his 'vicars, as *presidents* and *judges*, before whom 'all mortal sins into which the faithful might 'fall should be brought, to the end that, ac-'cording to the power of the keys for remit-'ting or retaining of sins, they might pronounce 'sentence.' And agreeably hereto, they have the confidence to speak of the confessary's chair as † 'a *tribunal*, before which the lapsed are to 'be sisted as criminals, that by the sentence 'of the priest they may be deliver'd from their 'sins.' Nay, they are so clear in this point, as to affirm, ‡ 'that a priest who is under 'the guilt of mortal sin may by virtue of 'the

* Sess. XIV. cap. 5. † Cap. 2.
‡ Cap. 6.

'the holy Spirit conferr'd on him in his 'ordination, as a miniſter of Chriſt, exer- 'ciſe the function of remitting ſins.' For which they aſſign this admirable reaſon: 'that 'tho' the abſolution of a prieſt is the diſpenſing 'of a benefit which proceeds from another; yet 'it is not a meer naked miniſtry, either of 'preaching the goſpel, or of declaring that ſins 'are forgiven; but is to be conſidered as *a judi- 'cial action*, in which a ſentence is pronounced 'by him in quality of a *judge*.' Now 'this 'judgment,' they wiſely * obſerve, 'the prieſt 'could not exerciſe without taking cognizance 'of the cauſe; nor maintain equity in enjoining 'puniſhments, if the penitents ſhould declare 'to him their ſins only in general, and not in a 'ſpecial and particular manner.' From whence they collect, (and the whole ſuperſtructure of this doctrine of auricular confeſſion is meer collection and inference from a perverted text of ſcripture which is laid as the foundation) † that 'penitents ought in confeſſion to recount all 'mortal ſins, even the moſt ſecret, of which 'they are conſcious after a diligent diſcuſſion; 'and likewiſe, for the reaſons before mentioned, 'all thoſe particular circumſtances which alter 'the kind of ſin.'

As to the manner of confeſſing in ſecret before the prieſt alone; they have the aſſurance to affirm, that ‡ 'this ſacramental confeſſion had 'been uſed by holy church from the beginning, 'and always commended by the moſt holy and 'moſt ancient fathers.' But they are more conſiderate

* Seſſ. XIV. cap. 5. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

ſiderate than to offer at any proof earlier than the fourth *Lateran* council, held in the year MCCXV; which ſeems to have been the firſt that * enjoin'd this confeſſion to be practis'd once every year. They might indeed have quoted a † provincial council in *France*, held about the year DCL, which declared 'repentance of ſins, which 'is the remedy of the ſoul, to be uſeful to all'; and decreed, that 'penance ſhould by the prieſts 'be appointed to penitents upon their con-'feſſion.' But if they could have quoted much more early, or more conſiderable teſtimonies than this, from any of thoſe *moſt holy and moſt ancient fathers*, of whom they were ſo wiſe as to ſpeak only in general terms; yet it wou'd have availed nothing in this caſe, where ſcripture and common ſenſe are againſt them.

It has been already obſerved, that the ‡ council of *Trent* makes an intire confeſſion of ſins, (that very confeſſion, which in the ſame ſentence they require ſhould be made by a prieſt in the quality of *preſident* and *judge)* to be *jure divino* neceſſary to all thoſe who fall into ſin after baptiſm. But they are yet more particular and more terrible. For in the ſixth canon they 'anathematize all thoſe who ſhall deny that 'ſacramental confeſſion is *jure divino neceſſary* '*to ſalvation*:' and in the ſeventh, 'all thoſe 'who ſhall venture to ſay, that in the ſacrament 'of penance it is not *jure divino* neceſſary to 'the remiſſion of ſins to confeſs all and every 'mortal

* Concil. Lateran. cap. 21. apud *Labbé*, Tom. XI. par. 1. edit. *Par.* 1671. pag. 172, 173.

† Concil. Cabilon. can. 8. apud *Labbé*, Tom. VI. pag. 389.

‡ Seſſ. XIV. cap. 5.

'mortal ſin, even the moſt ſecret, which can 'with diligent premeditation be call'd to mind, 'together with the circumſtances which change 'the kind of ſin:' in the ninth, 'all thoſe who 'ſhall deny prieſtly abſolution to be *a judicial* '*act*:' and in the tenth, 'all thoſe who ſhall 'deny, that prieſts under mortal ſin have the 'power of binding and looſing; or affirm, that 'any other than prieſts are the miniſters of ab-'ſolution.'

And theſe things I take notice of the rather, becauſe of a moſt unlucky circumſtance, with which this whole affair is attended; which is the making the prieſt's good intention neceſſary to the ſalutary effect of the abſolution he gives. This is cautiouſly expreſſed in one of the * canons of the *Trent* council: which 'anathematizes any man who ſhall affirm, that 'ſins are remitted to him who confeſſes them, 'when the prieſt abſolves not in earneſt, but 'in jeſt.' And one wou'd think, by the cautiouſneſs of the expreſſion, that the fathers of that council had found themſelves hard preſs'd with this doctrine of the neceſſity of the prieſt's good intention: which it is certain hangs like a milſtone about the neck of all the Romiſh ſacraments; and renders it impoſſible for a Romaniſt to prove, that there is at this day any ſuch thing as a prieſt, or indeed a chriſtian, in the world; becauſe no man can certainly tell, whether the perſon from whom he received orders, or baptiſm, perform'd the ſervice with the intention which the church requires. For thus

pope

* Seſs. XIV. can. 9.

† pope *Eugene* IV, in his decree at the council of *Florence*, held about the year MCCCCXL, expreſsly declares: 'All theſe ſacraments, (*i. e.* all the ſeven, among which that of penance is particularly mentioned) are made up of theſe three parts: 'that is to ſay; of things, as the matter; of 'words, as the form; and of the perſon of the 'miniſter who confers the ſacrament, with the 'intention of doing that which the church 'does: of which three if any one be wanting, 'the ſacrament is not perfected.' But indeed the council of *Trent* itſelf ſpeaks plainly enough of this matter, to deſerve to be charged with all the impious conſequences which follow this doctrine. For they expreſsly tell their penitents ;‡ 'that they ought not ſo to flatter them-'ſelves concerning their own faith, as to think 'that they are abſolved truly and before God, 'when the prieſt has not a mind to act ſeriouſly 'and abſolve truly.' Monſtrous impiety! and moſt unhappy penitents! to whom no humiliation before an offended God, no ſatisfaction made to an injured neighbour, no reſolution or endeavours of amendment, no real reformation of heart and life, nor all theſe together, can avail any thing, without the good-will of the prieſt! and whom, according to this deteſtable doctrine, God himſelf cannot abſolve from ſin, unleſs the prieſt too, when he pretends to abſolve in words, is ſo good as to do it with the ſerious intention of his heart!

But beſides the confeſſion, of which I have been treating, and beſides that contrition which

† *Labbé*, Tom. XIII. pag. 535. ‡ Seſs. XIV. cap. 6.

is to attend it; there is another thing insisted on by the church of *Rome*, before she will allow her priests to exercise their good intentions in giving absolution. Certain punishments are, at the priest's discretion, enjoin'd to the penitents, under pretence of * making them more diligent for the future. These they call *satisfaction*; and make them a necessary part of their sacrament of penance; as necessary as contrition or confession. For the institutes of their canon law expressly tell us†, 'that neither contrition nor confession avail 'much, unless to both these be added satis-'faction;' which in the same sentence is called 'a sort of compensation for an injury done.' And the council of *Trent* speaks as effectually as can be to the same purpose, when it ‡ anathematizes 'those who shall deny, that con-'trition, confession and satisfaction are all of 'them necessary in the sacrament of penance 'to the intire and perfect remission of sins.' Now, this satisfaction, the || council of *Florence* frankly tells you, is to be made *secundum arbitrium sacerdotis*, 'according to the will and plea-'sure of the priest, tho' chiefly by prayer and 'fasting, and alms.' Let it therefore be called 'a satisfaction made unto God through Jesus 'Christ;' as it is by the council of *Trent*;** and let it be colour'd over ever so plausibly with the appearances of religion: yet as long as the appointing of this satisfaction is solely in the will and pleasure of the priest, it is plain that the great

* Concil. Trid. Sess. XIV. cap. 8.
† Lib. II. tit. 5. ‡ Sess. XIV. can. 4.
|| *Labbé*, Concil. tom. XIII. pag. 538.
** Sess. XIV. cap. 9.

great concern is made the ſatisfying of him: if he be not well ſatisfied, there is no abſolution to be had. If the penitent is not to the full as liberal to the church, and (I may add) to the prieſt in particular, as the prieſt himſelf thinks he ſhould be; let him break his heart with contrition, and run ever ſo great a riſque by expoſing his ſecret ſins and his moſt important affairs in confeſſion; yet it all ſignifies nothing. Indeed effectual care is taken by the council of *Trent* to make the penitents liberal. For they plainly tell the prieſts,* 'that they ought, as 'far as the Spirit and prudence ſhall ſuggeſt, to 'enjoin ſalutary and ſuitable ſatisfactions, ac-'cording to the quality of the crimes, *and the* '*ability of the penitents:* leſt if they ſhou'd 'connive at the ſins confeſs'd, and deal too 'indulgently with the penitents, enjoining the 'ſlighteſt works for the greateſt crimes, they 'ſhould become partakers of other mens ſins.'

Thus important are the prieſts made: who by the church of *Rome* are conſtituted *judges* and *arbiters* in the whole affair of repentance; even with regard to many things which one would think ſhould be tranſacted between the penitent himſelf and God alone.

But it muſt be obſerv'd; that to keep the people the more effectually in ſubjection, there are ſome extraordinary caſes reſerved to the deciſion of the pope, and to biſhops in their reſpective dioceſes; concerning which the common prieſts are not allowed to judge. Only in the article of death there is no reſervation:

* Seſs. XIV. cap. 8.

and therefore in that caſe, ‘ all prieſts are al-
‘ lowed to abſolve any penitent from any kind
‘ of ſins and cenſures.’ So ſays the * council of *Trent*. And ſo the Roman ritual,† publiſhed by authority of pope *Paul* V : preſcribing in that caſe only this ſhort form ; *I abſolve thee from all cenſures and ſins, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, Amen.* The forms of abſolution in ordinary caſes are longer ; and the ſtreſs is openly laid, not upon that part wherein the prieſt ‘ prays that God would have ‘ mercy upon the penitent, and, forgiving his ‘ ſins, guide him to eternal life ;’ for this, and another form to the ſame purpoſe, the prieſt is ‡ expreſsly told he may omit ; but upon the following form, which I ſhall take the liberty to repeat.‖ *Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt abſolve thee : and I, by his authority, do abſolve thee, from every bond of excommunicaton,* † [*ſuſpenſion*] *and interdict, ſo far as I am able, and thou ſtandeſt in need. Moreover I abſolve thee from all ſins in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, Amen.* To this form is uſually join'd another ; which for its irreverence to our bleſſed Saviour, and contrariety to his doctrine, I cannot tell how to look upon as any thing better than antichriſtian : in theſe words. ** *The paſſion of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ; the merits of the bleſſed virgin* Mary *and of all the ſaints ; whatſoever good thou haſt done ; and whatſoever evil thou haſt ſuffered ;*

* Seſs. XIV. cap. 7.
† Ritual. Rom. edit. 8vo. Antuerp. 1635. pag. 67.
‡ Ibid. ‖ Ritual. pag. 66.
† *N. B.* This word [ſuſpenſion] is added only in caſe the penitent be a clergyman. ** Pag. 67.

fered; be unto thee for remiſſion of ſins, increaſe of grace, and reward of eternal life. Amen.

There are particular forms and meaſures appointed by the ritual for reſtoring of perſons excommunicate to the communion of the faithful. There is likewiſe a method provided for abſolving the dead, if in their life time they had given ſigns of contrition. But I will not detain you with the * recital.

I cannot

* I ſhall take the liberty to offer to my reader what wou'd have been too tedious from the pulpit. Among the meaſures for reſtoring a living excommunicate; the penitent, if his crime be very great, is to take an oath, that he will obey the commands of the church which ſhall be laid upon him on that account: and eſpecially, that he will not thenceforward ever offend againſt that canon or decree, for the violating whereof he has incurr'd cenſure. Then he is to kneel down on both knees, and upon the ſhoulder, cover'd only with his ſhirt, (if it be a man) to be laſh'd gently by the prieſt with a rod or cords, till the prieſt has recited a whole pſalm appointed for that purpoſe. Then, after ſeveral prayers and reſponſes, during which the prieſt is to be uncovered, he at length ſits down, covers his head, and delivers a form, wherein he declares; that 'he, by the authority of Jeſus Chriſt, 'join'd with that of the pope, or the biſhop, or other ſuperior 'concern'd in the affair, does abſolve him from his excommu-'nication, in the name of the Father,' *&c. Ritual.* pag. 68, 69. In order to the abſolution of the dead excommunicate; the body, if not yet buried, is to be beaten, and abſolved, and then ſuffer'd to be buried in conſecrated ground: if buried in a profane place, to be dug up, and after the ſame ceremonies to be buried in holy ground: but if it cannot conveniently be dug up, then the burying place is to be beaten, inſtead of the dead body: if buried in holy ground, then only the ſepulchre to be beaten. During which beating, whether of the body or the ſepulchre, the prieſt is to pronounce a certain form of words, and have reſponſes made to him. After which follows the form of abſolution, in theſe words: *I do, according to the authority granted to me, abſolve thee from the bond of excommunication which thou haſt incurred, [or art declared to have incurred] for ſuch a fact; and reſtore thee to the communion of the faithful: in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt. Amen.* And then the whole work is concluded with prayers and reſponſes. *Ritual.* pag. 70, 71.

I cannot diſmiſs this ritual without obſerving; that it directs the prieſts * ‘ to aſk *prudent* ‘ *queſtions* in ſuch caſes where the penitent does ‘ not expreſs the number, the kinds, and the ‘ neceſſary circumſtances of his ſins:’ and that tho’ † it bids them take heed that they do not ‘ detain the penitents with curious or unprofitable ‘ queſtions, eſpecially the younger people of ei- ‘ ther ſex, or other perſons, concerning things ‘ which they are ignorant of; leſt they ſhould ‘ thereby take offence and learn to ſin:’ yet the penitent is intirely at the mercy of the prieſt whether he ſhall be aſked ſuch queſtions or not: that it is notorious theſe things are often done, to the violation of all rules of modeſty and decency; and ſuch thoughts of any kind ſuggeſted by the wicked prieſts, as may beſt ſerve the purpoſes of their lewdneſs, avarice, or malice: and that in the circumſtances in which confeſſion is eſtabliſh’d by the church of *Rome*, there is no way to prevent ſuch evils.

The effect of this ſacrament of penance, (the ‡ council of *Trent* tells us) ‘ with regard to its ‘ force and efficacy, is reconciliation with God:’ agreeably to what they had affirmed a little before; ‘ that || the power of remitting and retain- ‘ ing ſins was given to biſhops and prieſts for that ‘ purpoſe;’ and ‘ that ** this their ſacrament is ‘ neceſſary to the ſalvation of thoſe who have ‘ ſinned after baptiſm.’

Thus I have ſet forth from authentic records the doctrine of the church of *Rome* concerning auricular confeſſion and prieſtly abſolution: in the

* Ritual. pag. 63. † Pag. 63, 64.
‡ Seſs. XIV. cap. 3. || Cap. 2. ** Ibid.

the doing which I could not avoid adding ſome other things relating to their ſacrament of penance, which are neceſſarily connected with theſe two articles. If I have drawn out the account into too great a length, it was becauſe I feared that a very brief relation would not give you a ſufficient notion of doctrines, which you would wonder ſhould ever enter the minds of profeſs'd chriſtians. The ſetting them forth thus largely will, I hope, in the minds of proteſtants, who are acquainted with their bible, and acknowledge that for the only rule of their faith, go a good way towards a confutation, and thereby ſhorten my remaining work. However, I beg leave, according to my propoſed method,

II. To examine the ground, upon which the church of *Rome* herein proceeds.

And here it will be neceſſary to conſider attentively thoſe texts of ſcripture, upon which they lay a ſtreſs in this argument: for they are forced in this caſe to have recourſe to ſcripture, becauſe they know that the common ſenſe and reaſon of mankind are againſt them: and they are glad to catch at any plauſible appearances, ariſing from a perverſion of ſingle difficult paſſages, detach'd from ſuch as wou'd ſufficiently explain them; becauſe they know, that a fair compariſon of one part of ſcripture with another wou'd turn to their confuſion.

But I cannot forbear obſerving what a meer farce the council of *Trent* acts, in appealing to ſcripture at all, for the ſupport of their doctrine of confeſſion and abſolution; when they had

had before laid it down as a rule, 'that it be-
'longs to * mother church alone to judge of
'the true ſenſe of holy ſcripture; and decreed,
'that no perſon whatever, truſting to his own
'prudence, in matters of faith or manners, be-
'longing to the edification of chriſtian doctrine,
'wreſting the ſcripture to his own ſenſe, ſhould
'dare to interpret the holy ſcripture contrary to
'that ſenſe which holy mother church hath
'held and doth hold, or contrary to the una-
'nimous conſent of the fathers.' What a farce, I ſay, is it, after all this, to appeal to ſcripture? For if the decrees of the *Trent* council were ever deſigned to be of any uſe to the common people, (and if they were not, why do the fathers of that council, in their canons, oblige all without exception, under the penalty of a ſevere curſe, to receive their doctrine?) if, I ſay, they were deſign'd to be of any uſe to the people, the quoting of ſcripture can never anſwer any ſuch purpoſe; becauſe the common people can make no judgment at all about it, for want of knowing *what ſenſe holy mother church has always put upon ſcripture*, and what has been *the unanimous conſent of the fathers* with relation to it. Nay, even if the decrees of this council were deſign'd only for the uſe of the prieſts, as one would be tempted to think they were: yet to what purpoſe is it to quote ſcripture? when, by appropriating *to the church alone* the right of interpreting ſcripture, they have taken it out of the power even of the prieſts to judge for themſelves: beſides that it is as impoſſible for the prieſts

* Seſs. IV.

prieſts as the people to know *the unanimous conſent of the fathers*; ſince it is well known that the fathers have differ'd very much in their judgments from each other.

But ſince notwithſtanding theſe things they do pretend to ſhew reſpect to ſcripture, where they think it may ſerve their turn; let us examine whether the texts they produce can ſupport the weight they lay upon them.

They tell us: 'our * Lord then chiefly inſtituted the ſacrament of penance, when being raiſed from the dead he *breathed upon his diſciples, and ſaid; Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt; whoſe ſins ſoever ye remit, they are remitted, and whoſeſoever ye retain, they are retained.*' And upon this text therefore they chiefly ground the power of the prieſt's authoritative abſolution, and the neceſſity of auricular confeſſion.

But nothing beſides their uſurped power of interpreting for all the chriſtian world, could enable them to impoſe ſuch a ſenſe as this upon our Saviour's words. If it were true, that this was our Lord's mind with regard to the apoſtles themſelves, the contrary to which I think is evident; yet how will this convey to the ordinary prieſts, in all ſucceeding ages, a power of granting authoritative abſolutions at their own diſcretion; or of claiming a particular confeſſion of ſecret ſins in order thereto? When Chriſt *breathed upon the apoſtles*, as a token of conferring the Holy Ghoſt upon them, did he at the ſame time breathe upon all the prieſts that were to come into the world? Did he by the

 ſame

* Concil. Trident. Seſſ. XIV. cap. 1.

ſame action, or indeed by any other, convey the Holy Ghoſt to them? Did he give to them, or even to biſhops themſelves, all the ſame powers which he gave to the apoſtles?

It is evident that the words in queſtion were ſpoken to the apoſtles, and to them alone, on the day when our Saviour aroſe from the dead: and we are to judge, by the circumſtances of the perſons to whom they were delivered, as well as by the words themſelves, whether our Lord meant to apply them to any other than their own perſons.

To the apoſtles it was ſaid with great propriety: *As my Father hath ſent me, even ſo ſend I you.* For this was an immediate and extraordinary miſſion of the apoſtles by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; as was that of Chriſt himſelf by his heavenly Father; tho' there was an unſpeakable difference in the dignity of the perſons ſent, and in the extenſiveneſs of the work. However, here was full power given by Chriſt to his apoſtles, to perform the work aſſigned to them; as there was by the Father to the Son, for the ſervice in which he was to be employ'd. But will any man therefore affirm, that hereby were convey'd to biſhops and prieſts in ſucceeding ages all the powers convey'd to the apoſtles? As well might he affirm, that the apoſtles did in this their miſſion from Chriſt receive all thoſe powers with which Chriſt himſelf was inveſted, and that they were ſent to do in all reſpects the ſame work.

But not to inſiſt any longer on theſe introductory words; I proceed to thoſe immediately following,

following, upon which the great ſtreſs is laid. *And when he had ſaid this, he breathed on them; and ſaid unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt; whoſeſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whoſeſoever ſins ye retain, they are retained.*

Now, make as little allowance as you pleaſe for the ſtrong figurative manner of ſpeaking in the eaſtern countries; yet do but allow that Chriſt underſtood what he was doing while he ſpoke theſe words, and I will appeal to you, or indeed to any man living, whether he cou'd poſſibly extend them to that ſenſe, which you have ſeen the church of *Rome*, and particularly the council of *Trent*, aſcribes to them. Can our Lord, by any conſtruction of theſe words, be ſuppoſed to have left prieſts his vicars, as 'pre-'ſidents and *judges*, before whom all mortal 'ſins into which the faithful might fall ſhould 'be brought, that according to the power of 'the keys for remitting or retaining ſins they 'might pronounce ſentence?' Can any man believe, that in order hereunto 'there was vir-'tually inſtituted by the ſame words an intire 'confeſſion of ſins to the prieſt;' and a power likewiſe conferred to enjoin what penances he ſhould think fit, and then to ſay to the penitent, *I abſolve thee?* Can any man really believe, that our Lord deſign'd ſuch a proceſs ſhould have the effects which the council of *Trent* aſcribes to it? particularly, that hereupon ſhould follow 'reconciliation with God;' and that yet it ſhould not be in the power of God to be reconciled to the penitent, where the prieſt happen'd

to with-hold his good intentions when he pronounced the words of abſolution?

It is impoſſible, I ſay, that ſuch things as theſe ſhould ever have been in our Lord's intention: and particularly impoſſible, that he ſhould have given to men the power of diſpenſing pardons in an arbitrary manner. The Son of God can never be ſuſpected of giving any ſuch power; ſince it would be inconſiſtent with the power of the divine Being himſelf: for beſides what is to be ſaid concerning frail mortal men in general, ſubject to paſſions and prejudices and miſtakes; and beſides that it is well known, thouſands of prieſts are ſtupidly ignorant, of the chriſtian religion, and almoſt of every thing elſe; it is certain, that wicked men (ſuch as the council of *Trent* muſt acknowledge *prieſts under mortal ſin* to be) might be erroneous enough to diſpenſe pardons, where an all-wiſe and perfectly holy God, even with all his infinite mercy, would ſee good reaſon to refuſe them.

It is indeed hard to conceive, how any man ſhould in earneſt believe theſe things. But this interpretation of our Saviour's words gives ſuch an acceſſion of power to the Romiſh biſhops and prieſts; that any one, who obſerves their numerous incroachments in other reſpects, cannot much wonder they ſhould inſiſt upon it. But they have no other way to make ſuch interpretations paſs, than by detaching ſingle ſentences from their context; making no compariſon with other texts which wou'd explain them; following, as in the caſe of tranſubſtantiation, the ſtrict literal ſenſe, where it is moſt evident that

ſenſe

ſenſe cou'd never be intended; and making no allowance for figures of ſpeech, where it is moſt evident they were deſigned; nor any conſideration of the character and circumſtances of the perſons ſpeaking or ſpoken to.

It is eaſy to darken any expreſſions whatever by ſuch methods as theſe, and to give them a ſenſe altogether different from what the ſpeaker or writer intended; whereas if we will take fair and candid meaſures of interpretation, a clear light may be thrown upon paſſages which have really ſome obſcurity in them. Thus, with regard to the words of our text: if we will make allowance for the figurative manner of expreſſion; compare the paſſage with others which have a manifeſt relation to it; and conſider how the apoſtles themſelves underſtood it, by the tenor of their writings and conduct after they receiv'd this commiſſion: we ſhall find the meaning to be ſomething very different from the forced interpretation of the council of *Trent*. We ſhall find; that when our Saviour *breathed on his apoſtles, and ſaid to them, Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt; whoſeſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted to them; and whoſeſoever ye retain, they are retained*; his meaning was to aſſure them, that they ſhould receive that infallible guidance and aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt, which ſhould enable them, without any danger of miſtake, to publiſh among men the terms upon which ſinners ſhould be pardoned, and upon the rejection whereof their ſins ſhould remain unforgiven. And hence indeed it will follow; that whoever ſhall in ſucceeding ages comply with

thoſe

thoſe terms, though declared by uninſpired men, ſhall receive the benefit of God's gracious pardon; and that they who reject thoſe terms ſhall go without forgiveneſs. The effect therefore, of *having ſins remitted or retained*, will in all ages of the church follow upon men's complying or not complying with the terms, which the Holy Ghoſt, conferred on the apoſtles, enabled them infallibly to make known; and conſequently does not depend upon thoſe terms being declared by a prieſt, any more than by a layman. If any man whatever, whether in holy orders or not, can be ſo happy as *to convert a ſinner from the error of his way*, by bringing him to a due ſenſe of it, and perſuading him to comply with thoſe terms of pardon and acceptance, which the apoſtles were enabled infallibly to publiſh; *he ſhall ſave a ſoul from death, and ſhall hide a multitude of ſins.* Thus we are expreſsly aſſured by one of the apoſtles themſelves; the apoſtle *James*, chap. V. 20. And that this proſpect is not confined to miniſters, or perſons in holy orders, appears from the addreſs in the preceding verſe, to all *the brethren*, to whom the epiſtle is directed; *i. e.* * *to the twelve tribes ſcattered abroad.* To all theſe the apoſtle addreſſes himſelf, when he ſays, *Brethren, if* ANY OF YOU *do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he ſhall ſave a ſoul from death.*

I cannot forbear obſerving by the bye; that the caſe here ſpecified, that of *brethren erring from the truth, and turning from that error*, is

* Chap. I. ver. 1.

is the very caſe of *the lapſed after baptiſm*; in which the church of *Rome* pretends their ſacrament of penance does *jure divino* neceſſarily take place. And yet the apoſtle is ſo far from intimating any neceſſity of confeſſion to a prieſt, or of ſuch ſatisfactions as he ſhall enjoin, or of receiving abſolution from his mouth; that without any difference between prieſt and people, he directs his diſcourſe to the *brethren* in general, and encourages them with the hope, that any of them, if they will uſe their endeavours, may be ſo happy as to *convert a ſinner from the error of his way, and thereby ſave a ſoul from death.*

And, I beſeech you, what is *ſaving a ſoul from death?* Is it a whit leſs than *remitting of ſins,* which is the phraſe in our text? Yet both the one and the other is, we ſee, in the phraſeology of ſcripture, aſcribed to men, who are only the inſtruments of this *remiſſion* and *ſalvation,* by perſuading their brethren to comply with the goſpel methods, to which *remiſſion* and *ſalvation* are promiſed; whereas, in ſtrictneſs of ſpeech, it is certain that none but God can *ſave the ſoul from death,* any more than *remit ſins.*

How evident is it, from this one paſſage of St. *James,* that allowance is to be made for figures of ſpeech? How evident indeed is the neceſſity of this allowance in all writings, and even in converſation? And how much more frequent are ſtrong figures of ſpeech in the oriental writings, than in others? And how viſible is it, that the ſcriptures abound with ſuch manners

ners of expreſſion ; which yet, by the circumſtances wherein they are delivered, are eaſy enough to be underſtood ? If it be objected, that it is hard to ſuppoſe this ſhould be done in the delivery of a commiſſion ; the objection is eaſily anſwered from precedents in the old teſtament ; where the prophets are, in receiving their commiſſion, told by the Moſt High himſelf, and without any danger of miſtaking his meaning, that they are ſent to do thoſe very things, which 'tis plain they are only ſent to declare. There is no need of quoting to this purpoſe any more than that one remarkable paſſage, *Jer.* I. 9, 10. *Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord ſaid unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day ſet thee over the nations and over the kingdoms ; to root out, and to pull down, and to deſtroy, and to throw down, and to build, and to plant.*

Will the Romaniſts ſay, that the prophet was to do all theſe things in the literal ſenſe ? Or will they pretend, that theſe words, together with the context from *ver.* 5. ſignify any more, than that *Jeremiah* was choſen of God, and by him perfectly furniſhed, and after an extraordinary manner ſent forth, to declare his mind and will to the nations ; and that the declarations ſo made ſhould have their effect ? Why, all this we allow was done by our bleſſed Lord with regard to the apoſtles ; and affirm that their commiſſion in our text is to be underſtood to this purpoſe, and not concerning the

power

power of *remitting* or *retaining ſins* in the literal ſenſe.

If we will judge how the apoſtles themſelves underſtood their commiſſion, by the work in which they chiefly employ'd themſelves; it will be eaſy to ſee, that they underſtood it to mean the preaching that goſpel, upon the reception or rejection of which men ſhou'd be finally happy or unhappy. And when Chriſt choſe them to be the firſt preachers of a doctrine, far from being favourable to the intereſts of deſigning men, or the pleaſures of the voluptuous; which for its naked ſimplicity would be deſpiſed by ſome, and muſt expect to meet with oppoſition from thoſe in every nation, who were prejudiced in favour of ſentiments and cuſtoms already in faſhion; it was in great wiſdom that he conferred on them the Holy Ghoſt: for hereby they were not only let into a more clear and comprehenſive view of his whole counſel, and better eſtabliſh'd in it, than under their remaining prejudices they cou'd otherwiſe have been; but were likewiſe furniſhed with extraordinary powers, for proving the certainty of their miſſion from him, and the certainty likewiſe of their delivering his true mind and will. Theſe powers they accordingly exercis'd on proper occaſions, as appears by their hiſtory: but all in ſubſerviency to their grand work of preaching the goſpel, and promoting in that way the intereſt of their maſter's kingdom. In which work they employ'd ſo much of their time; that if they had had any notion of the neceſſity of auricular confeſſions and authorita-

tive abſolutions, which it is plain they had not; yet it wou'd have been impoſſible for them to attend the ſervice, tho' of all men in the world the fitteſt for it, becauſe of that power of *diſcerning ſpirits*, which among other gifts of the Holy Ghoſt was imparted to them. And can any man believe, that the apoſtles underſtood the words in our text concerning authoritative abſolutions; and that yet we ſhou'd have no account in the new teſtament of the thouſands who muſt daily have flock'd to them in confeſſion? What! not come to the apoſtles for abſolution! who received immediately, from their maſter's own mouth, the authority to grant it! No: the apoſtles had taught no ſuch doctrine; having no notion that their maſter meant any thing like it: and therefore no wonder the people followed no ſuch practice.

Indeed, we need only conſider the words of miſſion, compared with the apoſtles practice, and that of their Lord himſelf who ſent them, to convice us what was the work, in which Chriſt deſign'd they ſhould be employ'd, when he ſent them forth. The words of miſſion are: *As my Father hath ſent me, even ſo ſend I you.* Now I ask; What was the errand, upon which Chriſt here ſent his apoſtles? Was it to ſit privately in judgment upon men's ſecret ſins, and to enjoin them penances according to their own will and pleaſure, and then give them abſolution? Or was it to publiſh to the world his goſpel, *with the demonſtration of the Spirit and power*; that goſpel, which himſelf had taught them, and which he had aſſured them the Holy Ghoſt

Ghoſt * *ſhould bring to their remembrance?* One wou'd think, that Chriſt himſelf plainly enough told his apoſtles what was the errand upon which he ſent them, by ſaying, that *as his Father ſent him, even ſo he ſent them.* For Chriſt in the whole tenor of his miniſtry declared, that the Father ſent him to make known unto men his counſel for their ſalvation; and that it wou'd have its effect in the ſalvation of thoſe who embraced it, and the deſtruction of thoſe who ſhou'd reject it: and this no doubt was the errand, upon which he ſent his apoſtles. This is indeed viſible beyond doubt in the two other places, where Chriſt's commiſſion to his diſciples is recorded: and therefore to them we ought to have recourſe for explaining the figurative expreſſions in our text. *Mark* XVI. 15, 16. *Go ye into all the world, and preach the goſpel to every creature: he that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; and he that believeth not ſhall be condemned.* The other paſſage, *Matt.* XXVIII. is more to our preſent purpoſe in one reſpect; as it is prefaced, like our text itſelf, with the mention of Chriſt's own miſſion from the Father, attended with powers which no man will be ſo extravagant as to affirm he communicated to others. *All power is given unto me in heaven and earth: go ye therefore, and teach all nations,* &c. This was the errand upon which the apoſtles were ſent; *the teaching men to obey whatſoever Chriſt had commanded:* and this work, he ſignifies, it was his mind ſhou'd be carried on *even unto the end of the world,* by

 promiſing

* John XIV. 26.

promiſing his preſence and bleſſing to all thoſe in any age who ſhou'd teach the ſame doctrine. But it will no more follow from hence, that thoſe others in ſucceeding ages ſhould be attended with all the ſame powers with which the apoſtles were attended, than that the apoſtles themſelves had *all power in heaven and earth* given to them, as Chriſt declares in the beginning of this paſſage they were given to him.

But farther: the interpretation which I have given of my text, with regard to the awful effects of the apoſtles preaching, is confirmed by the words of St. *Paul*, 2 Cor. II. 15, 16. which are very near as ſtrong in the phraſeology, as thoſe in the text itſelf. *We are unto God a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt, in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh: to the one we are the ſavour of death unto death; and to the other the ſavour of life unto life.* And 'tis to the ſame purpoſe, that the ſame apoſtle ſpeaks of *his goſpel*, i. e. the goſpel which he preached, as that, *according to which God would hereafter judge the ſecrets of men by Jeſus Chriſt.* Rom. II. 16.

And, that this is the true meaning of *remitting and retaining ſins* in my text, appears plainly from that other text, preſs'd by the council of *Trent* into the ſervice of authoritative abſolutions; *Matt.* XVI. 19. where the power of *binding and looſing* is evidently the ſame as that of *retaining and remitting ſins* in my text; and *the giving unto* Peter *the keys of the kingdom of heaven* leads us to the true meaning of *binding and looſing*, and conſequently explains the *remitting*

ting and retaining ſins, ſpoken of in my text. The *giving unto* Peter *the keys of the kingdom of heaven* manifeſtly receives its explication from his having the honour firſt to preach the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven after our Lord's reſurrection and aſcenſion, whereby that kingdom was eſtabliſhed. Whoever was firſt after this eſtabliſhment employ'd to preach the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven, might very well be ſaid, as it were, to open the gates of that kingdom, by *the keys* given him for that purpoſe. Now it is obſervable, that as ſome one perſon muſt be firſt in opening the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven; ſo the grant of *the keys* was made to one perſon; to *Peter* alone, and never to any other: but the power of *binding and looſing*, mention'd in the ſame verſe, and in *Matt.* XVIII, and that of *remitting and retaining ſins*, in *John* XX. were granted to all the reſt of the apoſtles in conjunction with him: and therefore that trite phraſe, of *the power of the keys*, confounded as it is with the power of *binding and looſing*, *remitting and retaining*, and applied to authoritative deciſions of eccleſiaſtical men, plainly appears to have no foundation.

But tho' the grant of *the keys* is not the ſame thing as the *binding and looſing*, preſently after mentioned; yet it leads to the true meaning of it. Chriſt aſſures *Peter*, that in his preaching he ſhould be enabled ſo effectually to deliver the terms, on which the Moſt High would receive ſinners to mercy, as that no perſons upon earth who comply'd with thoſe terms ſhould fail of being forgiven; and ſo to denounce the

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wrath of God againſt the unbelieving and diſobedient, that whoever ſhould reject his doctrine, and deſpiſe the authority upon which it was founded, ſhould not obtain pardon. This is the plain meaning of the promiſe made to *Peter*, that *what he ſhould bind upon earth, ſhould be bound in heaven, and what he ſhould looſe on earth, ſhould be looſed in heaven.* Now ſince this *binding and looſing* is the ſame as *retaining and remitting ſins*, and is in the promiſe to *Peter* intimately connected with preaching the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven: the true meaning of *binding and looſing*, and conſequently of *retaining and remitting ſins* by virtue of a commiſſion from Chriſt, muſt be preaching that doctrine, according to the tenor of which men ſhould have their ſins either *remitted* or *retained* by the great Judge of all. And well might they, who were ſent with a ſpecial commiſſion from Chriſt, to preach that goſpel, according to the reception of which the condition of its hearers was to be finally determined; well might they, I ſay, in a figurative manner of ſpeech, be ſaid by their preaching to *bind* upon the rejecters of it their great *ſin* in rejecting it, or in the language of our text, *to retain their ſins*; and to *looſe thoſe from their ſins*, or *remit their ſins to them*, who embraced a goſpel which expreſsly promiſes forgiveneſs to all that embrace it. In a literal ſenſe the words are not capable of being taken, without great abſurdity, and encroaching upon the prerogative of God. And the ſenſe in which I have explain'd them agrees ſo perfectly with a number of other ſcriptures which are clear to

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the ſame purpoſe, and with the character and conduct of the apoſtles, to whom the commiſſion was given; as plainly ſhews this to be the true meaning. And thus the whole Romiſh doctrine of authoritative abſolution, built upon the perverſion of our Saviour's words, at once falls to the ground.

If we were to conſider that other paſſage, where *binding and looſing* are mention'd; I mean * *Matt.* XVIII. we ſhou'd find that it is as far from the purpoſe of the Romiſh ſacrament of penance, as thoſe already conſidered; tho' it is certain it has a relation to ſins committed by chriſtian brethren, whereas the others relate to the effects of preaching the goſpel. It is ſomewhat uncertain, whether the words were directed to the apoſtles alone; or to other diſciples with them. But if it was to the apoſtles alone; yet 'tis plain it was not in their apoſtolical character, but as ſubjects in general of *the kingdom of heaven*, mention'd in the beginning of the chapter; and relates to treſpaſſes committed by one chriſtian againſt another. In which caſes, our Saviour, inſtead of ſending the offender to confeſs to a prieſt, adviſes the perſon offended to go, and in a kind and gentle manner to admoniſh his brother, in order to reclaim him from his ſin. Upon failure

* Matt. XVIII. 15—18. *Moreover, if thy brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more; that in the mouth of two or three witneſſes every word may be eſtabliſhed. And if he ſhall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church. But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Verily, I ſay unto you: whatſoever ye ſhall bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven; and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven.*

lure of ſucceſs in this charitable attempt, he is directed to take with him one or two more; ſtill with the ſame deſign, but ſo ordered as to carry more force with the admonition. If this is likewiſe unſucceſsful; then *the church*, *i. e.* a ſociety of the faithful, is to be acquainted with the affair: and if the admonition of the church, acting ſuitably to the known mind of Chriſt its lawgiver, is rejected; our Lord ſignifies, that the good admonition, given ſo agreeably to the duty of thoſe that gave it, and ſo wickedly rejected by the offender, will *bind* his ſin upon him; and that their judgment in ſeparating from him, ſhall be confirm'd *in heaven*. And he further ſignifies, that their judgment would likewiſe be ratified in heaven, if upon good evidence of his repentance he ſhou'd be reſtored to their communion. But ſtill, in this, as well as in preaching the goſpel before mentioned, there muſt be underſtood ſome rule, ſome certain rule, of the mind of Chriſt, laid down and obſerved, before the effect of *binding* or *looſing* can take place. The thing is not left to the will and pleaſure, of the preacher in the one caſe, or of the offended perſon, or even the church itſelf, in the other: but the mind of the lawgiver, regarded or not regarded, is that which *looſes* a perſon from his ſins, or *binds* them upon him; tho', according to the phraſeology of ſcripture, it is in a figurative ſenſe aſcribed to the inſtrument or means, by which this *binding* or *looſing* is effected. And in this ſenſe St. * *Paul*, ſpeaking of a perſon, from whom, for a notorious

* 2 Cor. II. 5---11.

notorious offence, the church of *Corinth* had withdrawn, and who had afterwards given ſufficient proofs of ſincere repentance, adviſes the *Corinthians* to *forgive* him; and declares that *he forgave him alſo*; and that whomſoever he had forgiven on their account, he had done it *in the perſon of Chriſt*, i. e. by his authority, and under the infallible aſſurance of his approbation.

Thus, I think, are the words of my text fairly reſcued from that falſe gloſs which the council of *Trent* had put upon them. But there are other texts, to which they have recourſe for ſupporting their pretenſions. Particularly, * they force into the ſervice of their ſacrament of penance the words of St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. V. 11, 12. wherein he adviſes the chriſtians of the church of *Corinth not to keep company with any brother who is a fornicator, or covetous, or a drunkard, or an extortioner*; giving this reaſon for it; (which, becauſe it contains the word *judge* in it, is greedily ſnatch'd at) *For what have I to do to judge them alſo that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?* But the bare recital of this text, in its proper connexion, is ſufficient to ſhew, that it relates to open faults, to which a publick cenſure is due; and has no relation to auricular confeſſion or prieſtly abſolution.

'Tis as little to the purpoſe that † they quote the words of the ſame apoſtle to the *Epheſians*, chap. II. ver. 3. wherein he tells them, that *they had been children of wrath, even as others:*

* Con. Trid. Seſs. XIV. cap. 2. † Cap. 5.

for they ſuggeſt no manner of reaſon for confeſſing ſins privately to a prieſt; which is the whole tenor of that chapter of the *Trent* council, where this text is quoted.

As little is it to the purpoſe, that the new teſtament expreſſions, of *violating the temple of God*, 1 Cor. III. 17. *grieving the holy Spirit of God*, Eph. IV. 30. *doing deſpight unto the Spirit of grace*, Heb. X. 29. and *treaſuring up wrath againſt the day of wrath*, Rom. II. 5. are * produced to ſhew, that they who have ſinned after baptiſm ſhould ſubmit to whatever penance the prieſt ſhall be pleaſed to enjoin as a ſatisfaction for their ſins.

Nor is it a whit more to the purpoſe, that the † *Profeſſion of catholic faith*, lately publiſh'd in the *Engliſh* tongue, *for the reception of converts into the church of* Rome, refers us to the old law, 'as a figure of the law of Chriſt,' to favour the Romiſh doctrine and practice of confeſſion. For, what if leproſy was a figure of ſin? What if the leprous were obliged, by the expreſs command of an abrogated diſpenſation, *to ſhew themſelves to the prieſts?* Will it thence follow, that under the new teſtament chriſtians muſt, without any command or direction from Chriſt their law-giver, confeſs their ſins to a prieſt, and take abſolution from him? What if the *Iſraelites* were ‡ obliged to make confeſſion, when they had been guilty of a treſpaſs, in defrauding their neighbours, or taking away their property by violence? What if after reſtitution atonement was according to the Moſaic law

* Cap. 8. † Page 22.

‡ Num. V. 5---8. Lev. VI. 2---7.

law to be made by a prieſt? Yet this will never prove, that under the goſpel, which acknowledges no prieſt but Chriſt himſelf, chriſtians are obliged to confeſs to a miniſter their ſecret ſins; or that forgiveneſs at the hand of God depends upon a mortal man's abſolution. What if upon St. *Paul*'s preaching the goſpel, attended *with the demonſtration of the ſpirit and of power*, by the miracles which he wrought, * *many who believed came publickly, and confeſſed, and ſhewed their deeds?* as, upon the preaching of *John* the baptiſt, † *Jeruſalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, went out to him, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confeſſing their ſins.* Do theſe things lay any obligation upon thoſe who are already become chriſtians, to confeſs their ſins privately to a prieſt, and kneel down before him for pardon? And laſtly; how vile is the perverſion of that text, *Jam.* V. 16. and how wiſely did this catechiſt act, in concealing the greateſt part of the verſe? for the whole verſe runs thus: *Confeſs your faults one to another; and pray for one another; the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* Now what colour of a reaſon is there to believe, that *confeſſing to one another*, in order to mutual forgiveneſs, could mean confeſſing to the *elders of the church*, mention'd in a quite different caſe in the preceding verſes? The ſame perſons are bid to *confeſs their faults to one another*, who are likewiſe bid *to pray for one another:* and therefore if the people are by this text

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* Acts XIX. 18. † Matt. III. 5, 6.

directed to *confeſs* to the prieſts, the prieſts are likewiſe directed to *confeſs* to the people ; if the prieſts are bid to *pray for* the people, ſo are the people bid to *pray for* the prieſts. And I am intirely of opinion ; that the prayer here deſcribed, *the* * *inwrought prayer of a righteous man*, even though he never were in orders, would be as much regarded at the throne of grace, and become as effectual for the forgiveneſs of an offence committed againſt himſelf and confeſs'd to him, as if he were poſſeſſed of the higheſt honours the church of *Rome* itſelf is able to confer.

Thus we have ſeen how little there is in the numerous paſſages I have been conſidering, to the purpoſe for which the Romaniſts produce them : that they really mean quite other things than they bring them to prove. We have ſeen in particular, that there is not in the words of my text, on which the greateſt ſtreſs is laid, any authoritative power of abſolution committed unto men ; nor any confeſſion to a prieſt inſtituted ; tho' the council of *Trent* ſays it contains both. We have ſeen, that what they interpret concerning the power of granting or withholding the pardon of ſin by biſhops and prieſts, was meant by our Saviour concerning the awful effects of preaching his goſpel by the apoſtles, under the infallible guidance of the Holy Ghoſt. We have ſeen, that our Saviour could not be capable of putting ſuch a ſenſe upon his own words, as the council of *Trent* has put ; becauſe it is inconſiſtent with the authority of God's own government.

* δέησις ἐνεργουμένη.

government. And an intimation has likewiſe been given of the dangerous tendency of that minute and particular confeſſion, which the church of *Rome* requires the people to make to the prieſts, of the moſt ſecret ſins, together with their circumſtances. But the dangerous tendency of this, and likewiſe of their doctrine of abſolution, deſerves a little more of our attention.

It has been already obſerved, that according to the circumſtances in which confeſſion is eſtabliſhed in the church of *Rome*, there is the utmoſt danger of violating all rules of modeſty and decency; by putting queſtions, under pretence of ſearching ſin to the bottom, which ſhall ſuggeſt wicked thoughts to the minds of young and unexperienc'd perſons, ſuch as otherwiſe wou'd never have enter'd there. But beſides this; auricular confeſſion is directly calculated, as there is no doubt it was deſign'd, to put the poor penitent wholly in the prieſt's power, with regard to eſtate, and reputation, and even life itſelf. The laity, I ſay, muſt in all theſe reſpects be intirely at the mercy of the clergy, if they can be brought to make it a point of conſcience to confeſs to them all their failings. And to what purpoſe is it for the canon law to tell us, * 'that 'if a prieſt reveals what he hears in confeſſion, 'he ſhall be depoſed, and wander about in diſ'grace all the reſt of his life'? If a prieſt who is himſelf *under* the guilt of *mortal ſin* ſhou'd be ſo wicked as to break his oath of ſecrecy; it wou'd be no very great wonder. And in that caſe, what

* Diſt. vii. de pœnit. cap. 2.

what reparation can the ſending him to travel abroad make for the unſpeakable miſchiefs of his perjured treachery? In the mean time, where is the probability, that the Son of God, who had ſo tender an affection for his whole church, as to *purchaſe it with his own blood*, wou'd lay it under the hard neceſſity of ſuch an intire dependence upon its officers?

Then, as to the doctrine of abſolution: I beſeech you to conſider, how directly that tends to the deſtruction of all morality and piety, all virtue and ſerious religion. For, how ſtrong a temptation muſt it be to a man vitiouſly diſpoſed, to be taught, that a prieſt, whom he may hope ſome way or other to influence, can abſolve him from moſt crimes to which his wicked heart is inclined? however, that his biſhop can do it; or at the worſt, that the pope can do it: and that the great judge of all has ſo far put the matter out of his own power, that he muſt confirm in heaven the judicial ſentence which ſhall be paſs'd in his favour here upon earth? What regard, I ſay, will ſuch a man pay to the judgment of the Almighty? what ſenſe of religion will he retain towards him? or what ſenſe of the natural obligations of virtue in his conduct towards men? How will he deſpiſe the doctrine of the neceſſity of reſtraining corrupt affections in order to be truly happy? All thoughts of this kind will be treated with the utmoſt contempt, when he conſiders, that, according to the doctrine of the infallible church, he need only put on an appearance of contrition, confeſs the ſin he has committed or reſolved upon,

on, ſubmit to the penance enjoin'd, and receive abſolution; and that then, having made ſatisfaction for his ſin, he is a clear man, and may go on in a courſe of the like actions, without any neceſſity of a real reformation. Thus the whole proceſs of the Romiſh ſacrament of penance has a tendency to make men regard external performances as an equivalent for inward and real religion, to draw off their minds from attending to it, and at length to extinguiſh the ſenſe of it.

And the tendency this way is the more evident, when we conſider, that in the article of death, as we have already ſeen, all prieſts are obliged to abſolve from all ſins without exception. This the wicked layman knows beforehand: and may thereby be encouraged to indulge himſelf in all manner of ſins, in the expectation of receiving abſolution at laſt, and the viaticum of the euchariſt into the bargain: both of which the * prieſts of the church of *Rome* are, under pain of eccleſiaſtical cenſure, obliged to give to thoſe who are dying by diſtempers, and likewiſe to malefactors juſt before their execution, if they deſire it.

The papiſts indeed, and particularly the author or authors of the † catechiſm already quoted, do not fail to charge ſome proteſtants with undertaking to abſolve dying penitents in a ſolemn manner, as by authority from Chriſt. But this I ſhall not meddle with; my buſineſs being to conſider the doctrine of abſolution

* Inſtit. jur. canon. lib. II. tit. 5.
† Prof. of cath. faith, pag. 21.

abſolution as it ſtands in the church of *Rome*. Now, beſides the natural tendency of their doctrine for encouraging ſin in the courſe of life; I would intreat you to conſider, with regard to a dying ſinner under trouble of mind; which is the wiſer and better method, which more agreeable to the character and duty of a chriſtian miniſter, and more likely to adminiſter real comfort where there is room for it: to declare to him the abundant goodneſs, and yet the perfect purity and rectitude of the divine being; to give him neceſſary inſtructions concerning the diſpoſition which God requires, mingled with aſſurance of his mercy to the truly penitent; to acquaint him with the goſpel terms of forgiveneſs, and exhort and encourage him to comply with them; and then, with hearty prayers for him, to leave him to the mercies of God, and the reflections of his own mind: or to hear his confeſſion, and then ſay;* *I abſolve thee from all cenſures and ſins, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt.*

But if all profeſs'd miniſters of Chriſt were to act thus conſiſtently with the principles of their religion; if they were to take no more upon them than to explain and exhort, to lay the ſcripture doctrine before the people, and labour to bring them to a compliance with its directions: *the power of the keys, the power of binding and looſing, of remitting and retaining ſins*, and in ſhort, the whole power of the church of *Rome*, would be demoliſh'd, which they are reſolved ſhall at any rate be kept up. Explications,

* Ritual. Roman, pag. 67.

plications, and exhortations, and the miniſtring of ſpiritual comforts, or of divine warnings ſeparate from human terrors, are thought too mean employments for men, who think themſelves ſo capable of diſpoſing God's favours, as to pretend to determine what puniſhments in this life ſhall avail to the pardon of ſin. Of this I have given you a general account already, relating to their doctrine of ſatisfaction. Give me leave now, in the concluſion, to remind you of that doctrine: wherein they teach, that * we 'may ſatisfy God the Father thro' Jeſus Chriſt, 'not only by puniſhments, of our own accord 'undertaken for revenging of ſin, or impoſed 'by the will of the prieſt, according to the 'meaſure of the crime; but alſo by temporal 'ſcourges, inflicted of God, and patiently borne 'by us.' In purſuance of this doctrine it muſt be, that in one of their forms of abſolution, already quoted from their ritual, they join 'whatever evils the penitent himſelf has ſuffered, 'with the paſſion of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, towards his obtaining remiſſion of ſins, and the 'reward of eternal life.' In purſuance of this doctrine they have an extraordinary law, peculiar to themſelves, expreſs'd in the words of pope *Clement* III. and inſerted in the † body of the canon law: wherein it is decreed, with regard to 'thoſe who ſhall take publick proſtitutes 'out of the ſtews, and marry them, that this 'ſhall avail to the forgiveneſs of their ſins:'

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* Con. Trid. Seſſ. XIV. cap. 9.

† Inter opera charitatis non minimum eſt, errantem ab erroris ſemita revocare. Statuimus, ut omnibus, qui publicas mulieres de lupanari extraxerint, et duxerint in uxores; quod agunt, in remiſſionem proficiat peccatorum. *Decr. Gregor. lib.* IV. *tit.* 1. *cap.* 20.

and that for this reaſon; 'that among works of 'charity it is none of the leaſt to call back wan-'derers from the error of their ways.' To this doctrine likewiſe has been owing the ſenſeleſs ſuperſtition of pilgrimages, to our Lady of *Loretto*, to St. *Jago di Compoſtella*, to the holy ſepulchre, and a number of other ſanctified perſons and places. In which pilgrimages, many of them impoſed in penance, as well as others voluntary, men have left their families, ſquander'd away their eſtates, deſtroy'd their health, and uſefulneſs, and often life itſelf. *Eraſmus* has, with inimitable ſpirit and judgment, expoſed theſe follies. I mention them, and the other particulars before named, as amazing inſtances of the preſumption of the Romiſh clergy, and of the real power accruing to them by boldly perſevering in that preſumption. They take to themſelves the prerogative of God, in declaring that ſuch and ſuch things ſhall avail to the pardon of ſins, when God himſelf has made no ſuch promiſe. And, as we have before ſeen, they have the impious preſumption to aſcribe reconciliation with God to their own arbitrary abſolutions. They make the effect of abſolution itſelf to depend upon their own kind intention. They will not allow that the Moſt High can refuſe what they grant, or grant what they have a mind to refuſe. And yet all this is cover'd with the ſpecious pretence of divine authority and commiſſion. In conſequence of all this, they lay upon the people what injunctions they pleaſe, by way of ſatisfaction for ſin: and the inconſiderate people, concluding that theſe muſt be extraordinary men indeed, who perſiſt in the claim of ſuch extraordinary

traordinary powers as by commiſſion from God himſelf, and who appeal to ſcripture for it, which ſcripture they themſelves are not permitted to look into; are before they are aware hurried into an acknowledgment of their ſpiritual powers, and an obedience to all their injunctions. Which obedience is indeed the more eaſy, becauſe the things on which the church of *Rome* lays the greateſt ſtreſs in this doctrine of ſatisfaction, are viſibly ſuch as may be complied with by men of carnal minds; who will ſubmit to any chaſtiſements and external difficulties, provided they may be excuſed from the trouble of ſubduing and mortifying corrupt inclinations. Let them but have their way here, and they will give up all power into the hands of the clergy: and ſo likewiſe will weak ignorant people of better principles, in the hopes of having eternal happineſs ſecured to them by theſe favourites of heaven.

And thus is the very point gained, to which the ambitious clergy turn their whole views. Power, extenſive temporal power, is the darling object of theſe men's deſires. And they enlarge their claims on a ſpiritual account, on purpoſe to increaſe their power in a temporal reſpect; going on from one ſtep to another, till they ſeem to think themſelves as gods over the reſt of the world. Theſe are the men, who are for cruſhing all ſuch as in the leaſt differ from the faſhionable doctrines and ceremonies, to which they themſelves are indebted for their grandeur: and, inſtead of ſoftening matters, out of a tender regard to their brethren's weakneſs, as by virtue of their character they are

obliged to do, take advantage of every little difference, to aggrandize themſelves by widening the breach. They encourage the impoſing of needleſs difficulties upon their brethren; whereby they prevent much of their uſefulneſs to the ſtate: and when once ſuch burdens are laid on, they can never find a ſeaſonable or proper time to have them removed, but employ all their influence to keep them faſt bound. I might have added; that they are not content to lay ſmaller difficulties upon their brethren; but that they perſecute with the utmoſt cruelty, even unto death, for meer differences in ſpeculation; ſo little can they bear to be look'd on as any thing leſs than maſters of the conſciences of all mankind. But the cruelty of the Romiſh perſecutions is a copious ſubject: and is committed to one, who I doubt not will handle it to your ſatisfaction.

When men arrogate thus to themſelves the prerogative of the divine Being, and even a ſuperiority to him, pretending that he cannot forgive where they do not or will not; and when it appears that in all theſe pretenſions they chiefly aim at temporal power; no wonder that deiſm abounds; no wonder, that in *Rome* particularly, the ſeat of the pope, who of all others arrogates the higheſt power to himſelf, there are ſo many deiſts, and ſo many atheiſts. If this be chriſtianity, it is natural for a man to ſay, I will be any thing elſe rather than a chriſtian. And even in proteſtant countries; by how much the more the power of the prieſts in theſe reſpects is cried up, by ſo much the more danger

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is there of men's caſting off all regards to the chriſtian religion.

For the improvement of what you have been hearing, let me intreat you to be thankful to God; whoſe great goodneſs beſtows upon you the ineſtimable bleſſing of liberty to conſult his word, for your inſtruction and comfort. By this ſacred record, which you have in your own hands, you are taught quite other doctrine concerning repentance and remiſſion of ſins, confeſſion and abſolution, than the church of *Rome* teaches. Be exhorted to follow the directions there laid down. And let not what you have now heard, concerning the corruptions of the church of *Rome*, keep you back, but rather excite you, to a ſerious confeſſion of your ſins before God, with abhorrence of them, and reſolutions and the moſt earneſt endeavours againſt them. Let it excite you to ſeek abſolution from that great and wiſe, that juſt and yet gracious governor, whom by your ſins you have offended, and * *with whom* alone *there is forgiveneſs, that he may be feared.* Be not afraid to go to God himſelf, in the name of Jeſus Chriſt. Aſk of him the pardon of your ſins: and you will not be denied. Let it be the ſincere deſire of your hearts, and endeavour of your lives, to pleaſe him: and whenever in any reſpect you have offended him, do not cheriſh or palliate the evil of which you have been guilty: do not plead for it, or harbour it in your affections; and dare not to repeat it in your practice: but humble yourſelves before him againſt whom you have

* Pſal. CXXX. 4.

have ſinned: implore his mercy in the forgiveneſs of it, and his gracious aſſiſtance to get rid of its power. And whereinſoever you have offended againſt your fellow creatures; if the offence requires a particular acknowledgment, make that acknowledgment to him whom you have offended, and make all the reparation you are able: and if he has a grain of goodneſs in him, he will do his duty in a hearty forgiveneſs: however you will not fail of acceptance with God, and of that peace and comfort, which naturally follow the diſcharge of your own duty. If any man has by his follies ſo involv'd himſelf, that he knows not how to direct his conduct: let him conſult any wiſe and good man, whether miniſter or not miniſter, it matters not; and get all the aſſiſtance he can for his guidance, and for reſtoring the comfort of his mind. Such a confeſſion as this, upon extraordinary occaſions, no ſerious chriſtian, of any denomination whatever, can think improper. But then remember: that you are to follow this advice ſo far only, as it ſhall approve itſelf to your own deliberate judgment, from its conformity to reaſon and ſcripture: that a grave experienced perſon, of any employment in life, may be very uſeful by his advice: but that no man, of any character, can oblige you to follow it in obedience to him; or, without breaking in upon the authority of God himſelf, pretend to give abſolution from ſin upon ſuch obedience, as the Romiſh prieſts do.

If I am ſpeaking to any of the deluded votaries of that corrupt church; I wou'd moſt earneſtly intreat them to ſatisfy their minds with true

true repentance towards God, reſtitution to their neighbour, and real amendment of life; without any anxiety about confeſſing to a prieſt, or receiving his abſolution. Be ſo good to your own ſouls, as to believe the words of Chriſt himſelf; who does not inſiſt upon ſuch penances and ſatisfactions as your prieſts lay upon you: * *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt:* † *Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wiſe caſt out.* You want no other mediator to appear before God in your behalf; no prieſt, to make or to repeat that atonement, which he himſelf has completely made already, and which he made ‖ *once for all. He is able to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come unto God by him; ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.* He has directed his apoſtle to aſſure us, *that* ‡ *if we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs.* And herein he does not make that difference which the council of *Trent* makes; of ſins before, and ſins after baptiſm. Nor is there in this, or any other text in the whole new teſtament, any mention or intimation of the neceſſity of confeſſion to a prieſt, or of ſubmitting to his arbitrary penances, in order to abſolution. The confeſſion is to be made to God; as the abſolution is to come from him.

To conclude. Let us all, both miniſters and people, converſe daily with the ſacred oracles; which will be our ſureſt defence againſt corruptions of all kinds. My reverend brethren in the miniſtry, I am ſatisfied, are too wiſe to be diſpleaſed

* Matt. xi. 28. † John vi. 37.
‖ Heb. x. 10. ix. 12. ‡ 1 John i. 9.

pleaſed at being put in mind of the importance of this duty: its importance to their eſtabliſhment as chriſtians and proteſtants, and to their uſefulneſs as miniſters. And if chriſtians in general would make it their practice to ſtudy the ſcriptures with impartial minds, we ſhould have no alarms of popery: for ſo long as this practice is kept up, it is impoſſible that the corrupt doctrines of the church of *Rome* ſhould be entertain'd.

F I N I S.

Printed for J. Noon,

TWO Sermons: *The one againſt the traditions of the church of* Rome; *the other about the right manner of contending for the chriſtian faith:* preached at *Barbican* in *London*, *October* 15. and 22. M DCC XXXII. on occaſion of collecting for the relief of the perſecuted Proteſtants of *Saltzburg*. By Joseph Burroughs.

Sermons preached on ſeveral occaſions, by James Burroughs.

The Popiſh Doctrine of Merit and Juſtification conſidered.

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT

SALTERS-HALL,

MARCH 20, 1734-5.

By *JOHN NEWMAN.*

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M DCC XXXV.

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ROM. iv. 4.

Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

THAT part of the ſubject againſt Popery which falls to my lot in this exerciſe, is to ſtate and confute the doctrine of the *Romiſh* church concerning the merit of good works, and the nature of a ſinner's juſtification before God; or the way and method in which he may find favour and acceptance with him. The words I have now read will lay a ſufficient foundation for the following diſcourſe, if you conſider how they ſtand connected with the context. St. *Paul*, the great apoſtle of the Gentiles, inſtances in the example of *Abraham*, the father of the faithful, that eminent pattern of faith and truſt in God, that he was *juſtified by faith, and not by works*; for if he had been juſtified by works, *he had had whereof to glory, but not before God:* but *the ſcripture ſaith, Abraham believed God,*

and it was counted to him for righteouſneſs. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

This doctrine is of a more evangelical and practical nature than ſome that have gone before, in which your eternal ſalvation is nearly concerned. It's no trifling or indifferent matter, or mere ſpeculation which has no influence upon practice, on what you build your hope of eternal life, whether on the merits of *Chriſt*, or your *own* merits in conjunction with his. If men were well acquainted with the holy ſcriptures, had but a juſt veneration for them, and did but pay a due regard to their plain declarations, one would think that a few ſuch paſſages as this in my text, might be ſufficient to convince any unprejudiced perſon what the ſcripture doctrine is, and ſo determine the controverſy between us and the Papiſts. But ſeeing they are conſcious the Bible is againſt them, no wonder they keep it out of ſight as much as poſſible, and will not truſt the common people with the free uſe of it. However, ſince they acknowledge it to be in part their rule of faith, and we own it to be our only and intire rule, we muſt form our notions of every doctrine of faith according to that revelation. Whatever becomes of their unwritten tradition, we are ſure * *all ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable*

* 2 Tim. iii. 16. Iſa. viii. 20.

ſitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs. To the law and to the teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.

I ſhall begin with conſidering the Popiſh doctrine concerning the merit of good works, and obſerve the following method.

Firſt, I ſhall lay down ſome things for the ſtating of it, to prevent miſtakes. *Secondly*, Prove that to be the doctrine of their church which I ſhall charge them with. *Thirdly*, I ſhall ſhew that there can be nothing meritorious in the ſight of God in the beſt works of good men: and, *Laſtly*, hint at the evil tendency, and miſchievous conſequences of the contrary doctrine, which is a juſt prejudice againſt it.

I. *Firſt*, I ſhall lay down ſome things for ſtating the doctrine. And *Firſt*, We muſt diſtinguiſh between ſuch works as are done *before juſtification and grace*, and thoſe which are performed *afterwards*; and between what they call a *merit of congruity*, and a *merit of condignity*. By the former, they mean ſuch works as deſerve a reward, not indeed out of any obligation ariſing from juſtice, but out of a principle of fitneſs, and the free bounty of God. By the latter, they mean ſuch works as do in and of themſelves, and in point of ſtrict juſtice, deſerve the reward. This higher kind of merit they only

only aſcribe to the good works of juſtified perſons, who have had a principle of grace communicated to them. As for thoſe works done before grace, ſome of their ſchoolmen aſſert that a merit of congruity belongs to them, or that they deſerve to be rewarded with pardon, and ſupernatural grace. But this is ſtrange kind of doctrine, and argues groſs ignorance both of the *condition* of human nature, in its preſent fal'n ſtate, and the *extent* of goſpel grace. The ſcripture repreſents men in their natural ſtate as *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, alienated from the life of God. The carnal mind is enmity againſt God, not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. They that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God.* We need preventing grace to enable us to perform every thing that is morally good. Whatever is done without it partakes of the nature of ſin, and is ſo far diſpleaſing to him, inſtead of meriting any thing from him. Beſides, they ſeem equally ignorant of the *riches* and *extent* of goſpel grace. God is always ready to aſſiſt our weak and honeſt endeavours. He does not require that we ſhould ſet about any duty in our own ſtrength, unaſſiſted by his grace, and he will not be wanting to thoſe who are not wanting to themſelves. But if ſinners think themſelves ſufficient for every duty, without an humble dependance on divine grace, they diſcover ſo much pride and ignorance, that inſtead of ſecuring the

divine

divine favour and acceptance, they will expoſe themſelves to his higheſt reſentment. I ſhall not inſiſt longer upon this, becauſe the council of *Trent* denies that there is any merit of congruity in this kind of works. Some have wondered at the reaſon of it, becauſe this ſort of merit is as much aſſerted by ſome of thoſe ſchool-men who were favoured by them as the other of condignity, and there is as much reaſon why they ſhould allow the one as the other. The learned Dr. *Allix* does, as I think, aſſign the true cauſe of this, *viz.* that there is not ſo much to be got by the former as the latter. If works done before grace could merit grace, then the power of conferring it would not belong to the ſacrament of penance and their other ſacraments, which the prieſts only have the adminiſtration of; and for a well known reaſon they are willing to keep the power in their own hand, that the people may have a ſlaviſh dependance on them. But it's otherwiſe with their doctrine of the merit of condignity. They cannot renounce this without overthrowing the foundation of indulgences, and ſo juſtifying the Reformation begun by *Luther*. By this means the Popes and Monks would loſe their credit, and the intire revenue of their indulgences. This was a ſufficient reaſon why that mercenary church ſhould make a difference between the one kind and the other.

I obſerve

I obſerve *Secondly*, That thoſe works, which many of them lay the greateſt ſtreſs on, and place the greateſt merit in, are not *truly good*. They uſually conſiſt in penances and pilgrimages, in paying for maſſes, in endowing churches and monaſteries, in ſaying ſo many *Ave-Maries*, and in paying their devotions to ſaints and angels before images and relicks, with the like trumpery. How little do they ever inſiſt on the weightier matters of the law and goſpel, on juſtice, faith, and the love of God, on the duties of ſpiritual mortification and ſelf-denial? They will ſooner forgive the commiſſion of the groſſeſt ſins and the neglect of the moſt ſubſtantial moral duties, than the omiſſions of their own ſuperſtitions. Theſe things are at beſt but will-worſhip, the fancies and contrivances of crafty and covetous men, which have no foundation either in reaſon or ſcripture. They are ſo far from being meritorious in the ſight of God, that it's difficult to conceive how any who have an high value for ſuch things, and who place a great confidence in them, can be in a juſtified ſtate. Tho' they who abound in this kind of works may merit much of prieſts and Jeſuits, it argues groſs ignorance of God's nature and moral perfections, to think that they can be of any account with him. He may juſtly ſay to ſuch, *Who has required this at your hands? Bring no more ſuch vain oblations, they*

they are an offence and an abomination to me.

I acknowledge *Thirdly*, That ſome of the Popiſh writers do not carry the doctrine of merit *ſo high* as others do. They write with greater decency and modeſty; their notions, at leaſt in words, are leſs aſſuming and ſhocking: But then theſe are uſually ſuch as have wrote in Proteſtant countries, or in ſuch where there has been a great mixture of Proteſtants with Papiſts, or when they have been forced to betake themſelves to colour and art in anſwering thoſe that have wrote againſt them, or when the bleſſed deſign of making new converts has been ſet on foot. Then they have made as artful a repreſentation of their doctrine as poſſible, that it might look like the doctrine of Proteſtants, that ſo the unwary reader might be the more eaſily deceived and impoſed on. But whatever ſeeming modeſty and moderation there may be in theſe repreſentations, and however they may come forth approved and recommended by great names, when they have had a turn to ſerve; I cannot think there has been much ſincerity in them; eſpecially when they have been publiſhed as the doctrine of their church, and not as their own private ſentiments. My reaſon is this; when the ſame moderate notions have been preached and publiſhed by others of leſs note, who could not ſo well

ſerve the intereſt of mother church, they have been cenſured and condemned for them, and ſuſpected of hereſy, and if they had lived where Popery had been triumphant, would have been in danger of the Inquiſition.

I fear many of theſe writers *ſpeak lies in hypocriſy*, and come to weak and ignorant men *with all the deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs*. This at leaſt we may ſafely ſay without breach of charity, that we muſt not judge of the doctrine of the Romiſh church by the private opinions of a few of their doctors, but by the decrees of their Popes and Councils, and by the Catechiſms which are taught among them with publick approbation.

But leaſt any ſhould think that we Proteſtants are enemies to good works, I ſhall in the fourth place ſuggeſt, what we hold concerning their nature and neceſſity. We readily own works truly good have an *intrinſick excellency* in them, and are highly pleaſing and acceptable to God: Such as the duties of piety and devotion, juſtice and charity, temperance and ſobriety. When they flow from a principle of faith in Chriſt, of love to God and duty, and are animated with the hope of the divine favour and acceptance, they are ſuch ſacrifices with which he is well pleaſed. They are inſtances of obedience to his command, and are

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our conformity to him in the moral perfections of his nature. They are profitable to our ſelves and others, and an ornament to our holy profeſſion, and have a tendency to excite others, at the ſight of them, to glorify our heavenly Father.

We alſo aſſert the *abſolute neceſſity* of good works to our eternal ſalvation, both by the conſtitution of God, and in the reaſon of things, as they are a neceſſary qualification for our future bleſſedneſs. *Chriſt will come in flaming fire to take vengeance on them who know not God, and obey not the goſpel.* He will be the *author of eternal ſalvation only to thoſe that obey him. To them who by a patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for glory, honour and immortality, he will give eternal life. They who do his commandments have a right to the tree of life. Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord. Faith without works is dead,* and can neither juſtify us here, nor ſave us hereafter.

We alſo hold that good works are of a *rewardable nature*, and ſhall be rewarded with eternal life. God as the wiſe and gracious governor of the world has been pleaſed to annex the ſanction of rewards and puniſhments to his holy laws. He promiſes to reward the obedient, and threatens to puniſh the diſobedient, and we may ſafely depend upon his fidelity to theſe his promiſes and threatnings. You read of *the reward of the*

*inheritance.** The kingdom of heaven is given to *children*, therefore it's an *inheritance*; but it is given to *obedient* children as a *reward.* The apoſtle tells us, that *every one ſhall receive his own reward according to his own labour.* † We may ſay to good men as he does to the believing *Hebrews.*‡ *God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which you have ſhewed to his name.* Our Saviour, *as the righteous judge,* will *give the crown of righteouſneſs* to thoſe who have *fought the good fight,* who have *finiſhed their courſe, and kept the faith.* It is the wiſdom, holineſs, and goodneſs of God, and not ſtrict juſtice, that has ſettled the connection between the precept and the promiſe, the duty and the reward.

The ſame holds true concerning the *proportion* as well as the *quality* of the reward. There will be different degrees of reward as well as of puniſhment. *As one ſtar differs from another ſtar in glory,* ſo it will be *at the reſurrection of the juſt. They that be wiſe ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteouſneſs as the ſtars for ever and ever.*‖ *As a man ſows ſo ſhall he alſo reap: He that ſoweth ſparingly ſhall reap ſparingly.* God in his infinite wiſdom has ſeen fit to make ſuch a connection as this; tho' the loweſt degree

* Col. iii. 24.
† 1 Cor. iii. 8.
‡ Heb. vi. 10.
‖ Dan. xii. 3.

degree of heavenly glory will be vaſtly more than a recompenſe for the beſt ſervices, and the greateſt ſufferings of the preſent life; which ſhews that all is of grace, and not of merit; unleſs by *merit* we mean no more, than that it became the wiſdom and holineſs of God to make and fulfil ſuch promiſes, and to ſettle ſuch a connection between our duty and our reward; and then this will be chiefly a diſpute about words. However, ſeeing the word merit has ſo proud a ſound in the mouth of a ſinful creature, and has been and ſtill is abuſed to ſerve very bad purpoſes, it is highly fit that it ſhould be intirely dropt, and no pretences made to it.

Fifthly, That which we deny in this controverſy is this: That the good works of the beſt of men do in their *own nature* and in point of *ſtrict juſtice* deſerve thoſe rewards God has promiſed to them. We thankfully acknowledge that he will reward grace already received, and improved, with farther degrees of grace here, and with eternal life hereafter. *To him that hath ſhall be given, and he ſhall have more abundantly. God reſiſts the proud, but gives grace to the humble.* All this is of grace and not of debt; for there ſeems a contradiction in the very terms, to aſſert, as they do, that one degree of grace ſhould merit another, ſince grace and merit are utterly inconſiſtent.

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II. We come *Secondly* to prove, that the doctrine of the *merit* of *condignity* is the doctrine of the Romiſh church. The council of *Trent* (which was confirmed by the Pope, and is generally received as the ſtandard of *modern Popery,)* aſſerts, * *That the good works of a juſtified perſon are not ſo the gifts of God, that they are not alſo the merits of the juſtified perſon; and that he being juſtified by the good works performed by him through the grace of God and merits of Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe living member he is, does truly merit increaſe of grace, and eternal life*; and denounces an Anathema againſt thoſe who hold the contrary. Here ſeems a ſtrange mixture of truth and error, and a plain inconſiſtency in this their determination. †A learned prelate obſerves, that they ſpeak ſo uncertainly of this point, as evidently ſhews they either knew not themſelves what they would eſtabliſh, or were unwilling others ſhould know it: To ſerve ſome purpoſes they might have in view, they left theſe things in great darkneſs and confuſion. But we may more eaſily judge of their ſenſe by their after-writers, who were the great champions of the *Roman* cauſe, and who are not afraid to ſpeak more plainly. Dr. *Allix* tells us, that *Vega*, who wrote his books of juſtification during the time he was at the

* Concil. Trid. Seſſ. 6. Can. 32.

† Archbiſhop *Wake*.

the council, maintains, that the council by truly meriting did underſtand meriting *de condigno*; and the doctors of the *Inquiſition* did moſt evidently declare as much, when they expunged out of ſeveral books of their church ſuch propoſitions as heretical, which denied the merit of good works. Let me give you an inſtance of this, which has been taken notice of by ſeveral * learned men: In the *Index Expurgatorius*, which was ſet out according to the order of the council, in the year 1584, the two following queſtions and anſwers, taken out of a publick office of their church, are ordered to be expunged.

Queſt. Doſt thou believe that thou ſhalt come to heaven, not by thy own merits, but by the virtue and merits of Chriſt's paſſion?

Anſw. I do believe it.

Queſt. Doſt thou believe that Chriſt died for our ſalvation, and that none can be ſaved by their own merits, or any other way, but by the merits of his paſſion?

Anſw. I do believe it.

How could theſe men, who pretend to believe the ſcriptures, without ſhame and bluſhing reject ſuch queſtions and anſwers, as ſavouring of heretical pravity? No wonder they contend for another rule of faith beſides the ſcripture, by which to judge of hereſy;

* *Uſher, Stillingfleet.*

hereſy; or elſe faith in Chriſt, and his merits as the only Saviour, which is one of the moſt clear and fundamental doctrines of the goſpel, could never bear ſuch a repreſentation.

Maldonate the Jeſuit alſo aſſerts, that *we do as truly and properly, when we do well through God's grace, merit rewards, as we do deſerve puniſhment when without this grace we do ill.* If there be an inconſiſtency in theſe words, and one part contradict another, let the Jeſuit be anſwerable for it. Another of their authors, *Andredius*, ſpeaks to the ſame purpoſe, *that eternal bleſſedneſs is no leſs due to the good works of good men, than eternal torments are to the evil works of wicked men; and that eternal life is ſo the recompenſe of good works, that it is not ſo much given of God freely, and out of liberality, as it is out of debt; and that the nature of merit and grace not being conſiſtent, the reward is to be reckoned not of grace but of debt* †. The famous cardinal *Bellarmine* expreſſly aſſerts, *that our good works do merit ex condigno eternal life, and not only by reaſon of God's covenant, but alſo by reaſon of the work itſelf.* ‡ I ſhall mention but one more who goes yet farther. *Vaſquez*, thinking that *Bellarmine* had attributed too little to good works, is not aſhamed to aſſert, that *thoſe of juſt perſons are of themſelves without any covenant, or*

† See Mr. *Clarkſon*'s Morn. Exer. p. 407.
‡ Bellar. de Juſt. Lib. 5. cap. 17.

or acceptation, worthy of the reward of eternal life, and have an equal value of condignity to the obtaining of eternal glory, and that there comes no acceſſion of dignity to their works by the merits or perſon of Chriſt ---- and that *tho' God's promiſe is annexed to the works of juſt men, yet it belongs no way to the merit of them, but cometh rather to the works themſelves, which are not only worthy, but meritorious.* From whence he draws this remarkable concluſion: *Seeing the works of juſt men do merit eternal life as an equal recompenſe and reward, there is no need that any other condign merit, ſuch as that of Chriſt's, ſhould interpoſe, to the end that eternal life may be rendered to them:* with more ſuch vile ſtuff, that I ſhall not ſtay to tranſcribe or repeat. * Now if this were not the doctrine of the *Roman* church, we may well ſay, as the formentioned prelate does, we are a little ſurprized that no *Index Expurgatorius*, no authentick cenſure has ever taken notice of ſo dangerous a prevarication; but contrariwiſe theſe are the great authors of their party, approved, embraced, and almoſt adored by the greateſt and moſt learned of that communion.

But beſides this plain language of their moſt eminent writers, it is farther evident, that the doctrine of proper merit muſt be the doctrine of their church, ſince ſeveral of

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* See *Wakes*'s Expoſ. Doct. C. E. pag. 22.

their other acknowledged doctrines do ſuppoſe, and are founded upon this. If no works are properly meritorious, then there can be no pretence for *works of ſupererogation*, nor for thoſe pardons and indulgences which are given forth upon that ſuppoſition; and ſo the poor wretches will be cheated both of their pardon and money too, and by truſting to ſo broken a reed, will I fear be left to bear the puniſhment of their own ſins. It's well known that the Papiſts pretend ſome of their ſaints have been, and are ſo very good, that they have merit more than ſufficient for their own ſalvation; they have ſuch a ſurpluſage of it, as is a rich treaſure laid up in the church, under the Pope's lock and key, which he gives forth, and transfers to others who can well pay for it. He is for engroſſing the power of every thing, by which he can turn the penny, and make merchandiſe of the ſouls of men. But there is not the leaſt foundation in ſcripture or reaſon for this kind of works, or the leaſt hint how the merit of them can be transferred from one to another, or how the power of this comes to be lodged in the Pope's hand. They were the *fooliſh* virgins that deſired the *wiſe* to give them of their oil, but *theſe* were too wiſe to part with any, leſt they ſhould not have enough for themſelves and them. Our Saviour has taught us when we have done all to ſay:

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We are unprofitable ſervants, and have done nothing but what was our duty to do. Since then ſome of the gainful parts of Popery are founded on this doctrine of merit as well as that of purgatory, it is ſufficiently evident, however ſome may mince the matter, that this is an avowed doctrine of their church.

I may further mention in proof of this, the matter of their private and publick devotions. How often do they join the merits of ſaints with thoſe of our bleſſed Saviour, and plead the one as much as the other, as if they were upon a level? Nay, if we may judge by the frequency of their devotions to the Virgin *Mary*, one would conjecture that they had a greater dependance on the Mother, than on the Son himſelf. - - - - - If any ſhould ask from whom did this proud doctrine take its riſe, I anſwer, that tho' ſome of the fathers did uſe this word *merit*, yet not in the ſenſe of the Popiſh writers. They mean no more by it, than we do by the rewardableneſs of good works, or that it's God's appointed way of obtaining eternal life: Or if any of them ſhould mean more than this, they are not our rule of faith, we ſubmit to no human authority, nor regard the ſentiments of men any further than they are agreeable to the unerring word of God. A learned divine, Dr. *Clarkſon*, thinks that the pedigree of this darling doctrine may be eaſily derived from the Phariſaical *Jews*,

from whom he ſays they have received a great part of their religion. The *Phariſees* were for infallibility, and of a magiſterial impoſing ſpirit in matters of conſcience, before the Popes were born.

As for the doctrine of merit, *Camero* cites a paſſage out of *Maimonides*, where he ſays, *that every man hath his ſins, and every man his merits, and he that hath more merits than ſins, is a juſt man; but he that hath more ſins than merits is a wicked man.* And that learned author is of opinion that St. *James* had an eye to this error of the *Phariſees*, when he tells us, that * *Whoſoever offends againſt the law in one point is guilty of all.*

Notwithſtanding all that I have ſaid to prove that this doctrine of merit, ſince the council of *Trent*, is the eſtabliſhed doctrine of the church of *Rome*, yet I deny not, but there are ſeveral perſons in the viſible communion of that church, who have juſter thoughts of God and themſelves, and more modeſty and humility than to pretend to any merit in the ſight of God. † Dr. *Allix* has fully proved that from the eleventh century to the beginning of the ſixteenth, this was not the generally received doctrine of their church. Some of their Popes and canoniſed ſaints have ſpoken againſt it in as free terms, as we Proteſtants could do. What can I ſay to all this, but that if the corruptions of this

* James ii. 10. † See his Diſcourſe of Merit.

this church grow worſe and worſe; if they lead men into groſs miſtakes in matters of the laſt importance; then the entring into, and continuing in her communion, muſt be more and more unſafe and dangerous. Let us not *partake with her in her ſins* and hereſies, leaſt we *partake with her in her threatened plagues and judgments.* This change in her doctrine in one century from what it was in another, is a plain evidence how little juſt pretence ſhe has to infallibility. If any ſhall aſk how it came ſo far to prevail, as at laſt to be eſtabliſhed by the council of *Trent*, the author I juſt mentioned gives us this account of it: *Thomas Aquinas*, who lived in the middle of the thirteenth century, was one of the firſt who broached the doctrine of the merit of condignity. He maintains, that *becauſe of the operation and grace of the Holy Spirit, wrought in the faithful, from whence good works do proceed, their good works do merit ex condigno.* This, as the Dr. obſerves, is ſo very weak a foundation, that one might naturally draw from it a doctrine directly contrary to it; for if our works proceed from the grace of the Holy Spirit, we can merit nothing by them, the glory being due to him, and not to us. Notwithſtanding this weak foundation, this man came afterwards to be advanced into the calendar of their ſaints, and his writings to be admired and adhered to

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by ſome of the orders of the church of *Rome*; and ſome that were great ſticklers for him, got poſſeſſed of the *Inquiſition*, and then they ſoon made uſe of this cruel and tyrannical power to cruſh all that contended with them in matters of religion. This being the caſe, what wonder this error did ſoon prevail, when the terrors of that helliſh tribunal did threaten all that durſt oppoſe it; eſpecially when you conſider that much about the ſame time the Monks got the power of hearing confeſſions, and directing the conſciences of men, maugre all the oppoſition of the ſecular prieſts; they being in the intereſt of *Thomas Aquinas*, and deſigning to advance the merits, and ſo the wealth of their convents, took occaſion, when in the *tribunal* of *penance*, to infuſe this notion of merit into the minds of thoſe who came to confeſſion. By this means it ſpread in the *Roman* church, and as it laid the foundation for their gainful doctrines of indulgences and pardons, and they began to taſte the ſweetneſs of them, we can't wonder that the council of *Trent* eſtabliſhed it, and anathematiſed all who ſhould oppoſe it.

But whatever authority this doctrine may derive from that council, I come in the *Third* place to confute it, by ſhewing there is no ground for it in revelation or reaſon.

Firſt,

Firſt, It is directly contrary to the plain and expreſs *declarations* of *ſcripture*. How often are we told that *we are ſaved by grace, through faith, and that not of ourſelves, it is the gift of God.** And that *not by works of righteouſneſs which we have done, but according to his mercy he ſaves us, by the waſhing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt.*† When the apoſtle ſpeaks of eternal life, as oppoſed to death, the change of the expreſſion is very remarkable. *The wages of ſin is death,*‡ but *eternal life is the gift of God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt:* and again, *Grace reigns through righteouſneſs unto eternal life by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.*‖ If our ſalvation be *of grace, it is no more of works, otherwiſe grace is no more grace*; and if it be *of works, then it is no more grace, otherwiſe work is no more work.*** The beſt of men in ſcripture are repreſented as diſclaiming all pretence to merit, when they have to do with an holy and righteous God. *Nehemiah* was an excellent governor, and did many things for the honour of God and the good of his church; yet he begs that *God would ſpare him according to the greatneſs of his mercy.*†† So *David* was an holy and devout prince, but yet he acknowledges, that *if God ſhould be ſtrict to mark iniquity, he could not ſtand before him*; and ſolaces

* Eph. ii. 8. † Tit. iii. 5. ‡ Rom. vi. 23.
‖ Rom. v. 21. ** Rom. xi. 6. †† Neh. xiii. 22.

ſolaces himſelf in this thought, that *there is forgiveneſs with God that he may be feared.** St. *Paul* after his converſion was probably one of the beſt men that ever lived, and yet he ſpeaks of himſelf as the *leaſt of all ſaints*, and owns that it was *by the grace of God he was what he was.* When he *laboured more abundantly* than the reſt of the apoſtles, it *was not he, but the grace of God that was with him.*† The better men are, the more humble apprehenſions they have of themſelves; they are uſually much in penitential confeſſions of ſins, and earneſt ſupplications for mercy: they are *looking for the mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto eternal life*, and often begging that they may find mercy for themſelves and others, in a dying day, and in the judgment day.

I am not inſenſible that the *Romaniſts* ſometimes bring ſcripture to ſupport their doctrine of merit: But we may be as ſure their interpretation cannot be the true ſenſe, as we are that one place of ſcripture does not contradict another. Is eternal life ſometimes called a *reward?* at another time it is called the *gift* of God, and therefore muſt be a reward of grace. Is it ſtiled a *crown of righteouſneſs*, that is owing to the purchaſe of Chriſt, and to God's faithfulneſs to his promiſe, which is one branch of his juſtice or righteouſneſs? But then it was grace that made

* Pſal. cxxx. 3, 4. † 1 Cor. xv. 10.

made the promiſe of ſo great a reward. Again, When ſaints are ſaid to *walk with Chriſt, for they are worthy*, this worthineſs is an evangelical, and not a legal one. It only denotes their qualification and meetneſs for the promiſed bleſſedneſs, and not their deſert of it. Theſe and many ſuch like expreſſions declare the wiſdom and holineſs, grace and goodneſs, bounty and liberality of our merciful God and father, and not the merit of thoſe who are thus favoured by him.

This will be further evident by conſidering, *Secondly*, the reaſon of things. None of the conditions and qualifications of merit are found in the beſt works of good men. I would illuſtrate this matter under a few particulars. *Firſt*, It ſeems impoſſible to me *that any creature*, how excellent and glorious ſoever, ſhould *merit* any thing at God's hand in a way of *commutative juſtice*, and that, becauſe he is a creature. There may be merit between one creature and another, but there can be none between the creator and his creatures. The angels and archangels, ſeraphims and cherubims received their being and all their excellencies from God, and on him they depend for the continuance of them: the greater theſe are, and the more glorious the works are, which they are capable of performing, the greater is their obligation, honour and happineſs.

They are indebted to him, and not he to them. They may be aſſured indeed from his wiſdom, goodneſs and faithfulneſs, that he will never put a period to their being and bleſſedneſs, but where would be the injuſtice if he did? He would only recal what at firſt he freely gave, and was at liberty to continue a longer or ſhorter time, as it pleaſed him. Theſe holy and excellent creatures are the moſt humble ones, and are repreſented in ſcripture in the loweſt poſtures of adoration, as vailing their faces before God's throne, and caſting their crowns down at his feet, aſcribing bleſſing and honour and glory to his perfections, and not to their own merits. Now if theſe noble creatures, that have never ſinned, have no pretences to merit, much leſs can ſuch mean and ſinful creatures as we are. For,

Secondly, We are ſo far from meriting, that we cannot *ſatisfy* divine juſtice for our paſt and daily offences. We are ſinners both by nature and practice; in many things we often offend, and are taught by our bleſſed Saviour to pray for continual pardon. Now pardon and merit ſeem inconſiſtent. If our preſent and future obedience could be perfect and ſpotleſs, this would be no more than our indiſpenſible duty, and could be no ſatisfaction to juſtice for ſin; for the not running farther into debt is no payment of our old ones. How then can inſolvent debtors pretend

tend to merit? Nay, ſuppoſe our good works could be a ſatisfaction, it can be no meritorious act only to pay our juſt debts: But this is not the caſe with us. For,

Thirdly, There are *ſinful defects* cleaving to our beſt duties, which will not bear the ſtrict eye and inſpection of God's impartial juſtice. There is that iniquity in our holy things, for which God might condemn us, if he ſhould enter into judgment with us. Were it not for Chriſt's perfect atonement, and prevalent interceſſion, there would be no hope of audience and acceptance. They are groſsly ignorant of themſelves, who reckon that their beſt works come up to the purity, ſpirituality, and extent of God's righteous law, for that reaches to the thoughts and intents of the heart, to the principles and ends as well as the matter of our actions. Who dare ſay, that he loves the Lord his God with all his heart, ſoul and ſtrength, or that he ever performed one religious duty without any vain thought mixing with it? How numerous are the defects of our beſt graces and duties? All pretences to ſinleſs perfection are the effects of pride and ignorance. *If we ſay we have no ſin, we deceive ourſelves and the truth is not in us.* We have not yet felt the power of goſpel truth; *that* is the religion of ſinners, and ſuppoſes us from firſt to laſt to be imperfect creatures. Integrity or uprightneſs of heart and life is the beſt

perfection we can attain to; and it is our happineſs that we are under ſuch a diſpenſation of grace, as accepts of ſincerity inſtead of legal perfection, as the term of life. Now ſince our beſt works cannot juſtify themſelves at the bar of God's juſtice, how can they juſtify us before him, or merit any thing at his hand.---Yet further,

The good that is done by us is not performed by our *own ſtrength*, but by ſtrength derived from above. The ſinful defect of our works is from ourſelves, but the goodneſs of them, by which they are pleaſing to God, is from him. It's by his grace we are what we are, and do what we do. We need both preventing and aſſiſting grace to enable us to do any thing that is ſpiritually good. *We have no ſufficiency of our own, but all our ſufficiency is of God. It is he that works in us both to will and to do of his own good pleaſure.* We are alſo ſaid to be *his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works.* Now if we have *nothing but what we have received*, how unreaſonable is it to boaſt as *if we had not received it?* Our adverſaries themſelves don't deny the aſſiſtance of grace: But how that which is the effect of another's grace can be meritorious, is hard to underſtand, eſpecially how it can merit of him, from whom the grace itſelf was received. That by which we merit

merit ought in all reaſon to be our own, and not another's.

I add to this, that our beſt works can no way be *profitable to God.* Tho' we may rob him of his juſt rights by with-holding that homage and obedience which is his due, and tho' he is pleaſed to accept our ſincere but imperfect ſervices, yet it's impoſſible *to be profitable to him, as one man is profitable to another, and as he who is wiſe is profitable to himſelf. Is it any pleaſure to the almighty that thou art righteous, or is it any gain to him that thou makeſt thy way perfect?* If thou ſinneſt, what doſt thou againſt him, or if thy tranſgreſſions be multiplied, what doſt thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what giveſt thou him, or what receiveth he at thy hand? Thy wickedneſs may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteouſneſs may profit the ſon of man.* Tho' our *goodneſs* may *extend to* our fellow creatures, *to the ſaints that are in the earth,* it cannot extend to God. His bleſſedneſs is ſo perfect and unchangeable, that it's not capable of any addition or diminution. Now in all proper merit, there is in ſome ſenſe an exchange of benefit. Benefits are given for benefits received. There is a vaſt difference between the obedience and ſufferings of our bleſſed Saviour, and our beſt ſervices. Such was

* Job xxii. 2, 3. and xxxv. 6, 7, 8.

was the dignity of his perſon, that he both could and did make reparation for the injury done to the honour of God's law and government, and opened a way for the diſplay of his glorious perfections in our recovery and ſalvation. He therefore may be ſaid truly to merit, tho' we cannot; for his ſufferings were a valuable conſideration for the bleſſings beſtowed upon us. But ſuch is our meanneſs and poverty, and his all-ſufficiency and fulneſs, that proper merit can have no place on our part, in any of our tranſactions with him.

Once more, There is no *proportion* between our beſt works, and the rewards he has promiſed, either in point of *excellency* or *duration.* This there ought to be, if the former in ſtrict juſtice did deſerve the latter. How mean and poor are our beſt ſervices! We work like ourſelves, like weak and imperfect creatures, but the great God rewards like himſelf, as a free and noble benefactor, becoming the largeneſs of his bounty and liberality. Do we believe the goſpel promiſes concerning the greatneſs and excellency of the heavenly glory, that it exceeds all preſent thought and expreſſion, for *eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor can it enter into the heart of man, what God hath prepared for them that love him?* Are we to *behold his face in righteouſneſs and to be ſatiſfied*

fied with his likeneſs upon us; to be in *his preſence, where there is fulneſs of joy, and pleaſures for evermore?* And can we be ſo ſtupidly proud and ignorant as to think our ſorry ſervices are a valuable conſideration for all this glory? How few are our good works, and of how ſhort a continuance? If we began never ſo ſoon, and continued never ſo long, and ſuffered never ſo much in the ſervice of God, all this would take in but the compaſs of a few years, whereas the promiſed reward is eternal and unchangeable. We are *called by the God of all grace unto his eternal glory by Jeſus Chriſt*, and are *begotten again to the lively hope of an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* What can be more evident than that neither the ſervices nor *ſufferings of the preſent life are worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed.*

Let me now in the *Fourth* place ſuggeſt a few of the pernicious conſequences that attend the doctrine of merit, and are a juſt prejudice againſt it.

Firſt, This tends to puff up the minds of carnal ſinners with *ſpiritual pride*. Tho', our adverſaries own in words the influence of grace, yet if we can ſo improve this grace, as to merit eternal life at the hand of God, this

this thought will naturally elate the ſpirit, and gives ground for boaſting, which in our fal'n ſtate we are very ſubject to. We are poor and proud, too apt to think we are ſomething, when we are nothing. Tho' pride was never made for apoſtate man, yet there are ſad remains of it in all of us.

How prone are ignorant ſinners to truſt to and depend on themſelves, how gladly would they be their own ſaviour and happineſs, and not be obliged to look out for ſomething to recommend them to the divine favour and acceptance? The religion of Popery is too much the dictate of corrupt nature in all unrenewed men; but it's a temper abhorred of God, directly oppoſite to the true ſpirit of the goſpel and the ſtated method of our recovery and ſalvation. Man fell by pride, and the firſt right ſtep towards his reſtoration muſt be in deep humiliation and poverty of ſpirit; for *God reſiſts the proud.* The poor Publican that ſmote upon his breaſt, ſaying, *God be merciful to me a ſinner*, was *juſtified* before the proud Phariſee, that *thanked God he was not as other men.*

Secondly, This doctrine *derogates* from the *merits of Jeſus Chriſt.* Tho' the Papiſts do not render them wholly uſeleſs and ſuperfluous, yet as ſome of them repreſent the matter, they were only neceſſary to procure the firſt grace for us; for after that, they tell

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us we may merit for ourſelves both increaſe of grace here, and eternal life hereafter. And is not this to ſet aſide Chriſt and his merits, as of little uſe in the Chriſtian life? Whereas we ought from firſt to laſt, *to live by the faith of the Son of God*, a life of conſtant dependance on his ſatisfaction and mediation. To ſay, as ſome of them do, that Chriſt merited that we might merit, or that by his merits our good works become meritorious, is a notion to me altogether ſtrange and unintelligible. I can eaſily apprehend how it may be conſiſtent with the perfections of God's nature and government, to accept the weak and imperfect ſervices of ſuch imperfect creatures as we are, for the ſake of Chriſt's perfect righteouſneſs and atonement (and indeed I don't ſee how it would be becoming a righteous and holy God to accept of any thing but what was either perfect in itſelf, or for the ſake of that which is ſo.) But how Chriſt's merits, which are without us, can make any intrinſick alteration in the works that are done by us, ſo that with them our works are meritorious, and without them are not, is what I cannot underſtand. They are intrinſically the ſame, whether we conſider his merits or not. He merited for us, and is willing we ſhould have the benefit of it; but it was never his deſign to make us our own Saviour; we ought to abhor every doctrine that dero-

gates from the honour of our bleſſed Redeemer, and would ſet us upon a level with him.

Thirdly, This has a tendency to *miſlead men*, in matters of the greateſt moment and importance; for of that nature are the concerns of our eternal ſalvation. I fear thoſe who conceit they have any meritorious works of their own, and truſt in them, will be found to build upon the ſand, and will meet with a fatal diſappointment. It's true our adverſaries own, that theſe works muſt be the effect of juſtifying grace; but I greatly queſtion whether any who have felt the power of divine grace, or know the grace of God in truth, can believe their works are of a meritorious nature; for true grace humbles the ſoul, and lays it low in the ſight of God. It's evident, as I have already hinted, that the works they lay the greateſt ſtreſs on, are of little account with him; they are at beſt but the dead form and image of religion. How dangerous muſt it be for men to build their hope upon ſuch a foundation to the neglect of Chriſt, ſerious, vital and practical religion!

Fourthly, This notion *caſts a damp upon*, and deſtroys the hope of the moſt humble and ſerious Chriſtians: They have that deep ſenſe of their own imperfection, weakneſs and unworthineſs, that if they were to have no more grace here or glory hereafter than what they could

could merit at the hand of God, they would ſoon lie down in ſorrow and deſpair. Sometimes the number and aggravation of their ſins are impreſſed with that weight upon their minds, that they find it difficult to believe there is grace enough in God, and merit enough in Chriſt to pardon and ſave them. However while they look upon eternal life as the gift of God and purchaſe of Chriſt, there are happy ſeaſons when they entertain a lively proſpect of it; but if it were to be their own purchaſe, they know ſo much againſt themſelves, as would cut off all hope and expectation.

I ſhall only add, that the doctrine of merit *prepares the way*, and lays a foundation for ſeveral other Popiſh doctrines, which are of a pernicious nature; ſuch as works of ſupererogation, pardons, and indulgences, and the like. If we can't merit for ourſelves, much leſs can we merit for others, by doing more than is neceſſary for our own ſalvation. What then will become of the ſtock of merit in the treaſury of the church, which, as you have heard, the Pope gives out upon ſeveral occaſions to thoſe who have no merit of their own, and can pay for it? Tho' the loſs of theſe doctrines would be a manifeſt prejudice to his Holineſs, and the whole army of Monks and Friars that have a dependance on him, yet I believe it will be no real detriment to the ſouls of men.

It's more than time that I ſhould ſubjoin a few things upon the other part of my ſubject, concerning the nature of a ſinner's juſtification before God. This is a doctrine of great importance in the Chriſtian religion, which was very much darkened, and obſcured, and perverted by the Papiſts before the Reformation. Their doctrine of human ſatisfaction and penances had a tendency either to diſtreſs the conſciences of awakened ſinners, or to lay them aſleep by dangerous opiates, inſtead of leading them to the blood of Chriſt, the only healing balſam for a wounded ſpirit. After what I have already ſaid of their doctrine of merit, I need not be large here; for if no works of ours, internal or external, are perfect and meritorious, they can never be the ground of our juſtification before God. The Papiſts ſeem to me to confound ſanctification with juſtification. Tho' they mention the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and the remiſſion of ſins as neceſſary ingredients in our juſtification, yet they make our own inherent righteouſneſs and good works as neceſſary a part of it, which ſeems to ſet them upon a level with Chriſt's righteouſneſs and God's pardoning mercy. The council of *Trent* defines juſtification to be *not only remiſſion of ſins, but the ſanctification and renovation of the inner man, and* makes the only *formal cauſe of our juſtification to be that righteouſneſs of God by which*

*which he makes us righteous, and by which we are renewed in the ſpirit of our mind.** This council, which is much more free in enforcing her decrees and canons with a ſolemn curſe than with ſolid reaſon, pronounces an anathema againſt any who ſhall ſay that *men are juſtified either by the alone imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, or only by the remiſſion of ſins, excluding grace and charity, which is diffuſed in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt, and inheres in them*; or *that the grace by which we are juſtified is only the favour of God.* This at beſt is a very perplext and confuſed account of this important matter, and is apt to lead the ignorant and injudicious into dangerous miſtakes.

I am unwilling needleſsly to multiply verbal diſputes, and therefore freely acknowledge that the word we tranſlate *juſtify* may ſignify *to make one juſt*, and in ſome few places of ſcripture may admit this ſenſe: but it's more commonly taken in a *forenſick* and judicial ſenſe, and not in a *moral* one: to be juſtified is to be accounted and treated as a righteous perſon, and not to be made inherently ſo. It's oppoſed to condemnation, and includes in it pardon of ſin, and a right to life.---We alſo own the *neceſſity* of ſanctification as well as juſtification. We need the ſpirit of Chriſt to renew our natures, as well as his blood to expiate our guilt.

* Con. Trid. Seſs. 6. cap. 7. can. 11.

guilt. *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord. Only the pure in heart ſhall ſee God. The unrighteous ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God.* The heavenly inheritance belongs only to thoſe who are *ſanctified by faith in Chriſt Jeſus.* It is the *inheritance of the ſaints in light.* We alſo affirm that juſtification and ſanctification are two invaluable bleſſings that always *go together.* None are juſtified but at the ſame time they are ſanctified. *Chriſt is made of God to them wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption.* We read of being *waſhed, juſtified and ſanctified in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the ſpirit of our God.* If we ſpeak only of *initial* ſanctification, it's the ſame thing for ſubſtance with faith and repentance, regeneration and converſion, and is antecedently neceſſary to our pardon and acceptance. But if by it we mean *progreſſive* mortification and holineſs, our dying more and more to ſin and living unto righteouſneſs, then it's conſequent on our juſtification, and is the beſt evidence of our being in a juſtified ſtate.

Notwithſtanding theſe conceſſions, we ſtill aſſert that the ſcriptures ſpeak of juſtification and ſanctification as *two* very diſtinct and different privileges of the covenant of grace. The one removes the guilt of ſin, and ſo our obligation to puniſhment; the other, as far as it prevails, removes the power

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and pollution of it: tho' it be imperfect at firſt, it is or ſhould be of a progreſſive nature. The one is God's gracious act towards us, the other is his good work in us. The one cauſes a change in relation to God and his righteous law, the other a real change in the temper and diſpoſition of the ſoul. In order to ſet this matter in a little more clear and diſtinct light, I ſhall ſuggeſt the following things.

Firſt, To juſtify is the *act of God* as our righteous *governor and judge*, and not as he is the author of inherent grace. *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* It is God that juſtifies. It is the ſame God that juſtifies the circumciſion by faith, and the uncircumciſion through faith.* None but that God, againſt whom ſin is moſt immediately committed, can remit the penalty of his own violated law. He claims this as his prerogative. *I, even I am he who blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for my own name ſake.* He promiſes to be *merciful to our unrighteouſneſs, and our ſins and iniquities to remember no more.* His perfections are frequently celebrated and adored upon this account. *Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin?* It's he that in the goſpel covenant has ſettled the terms of forgiveneſs, or the way and method of finding acceptance with him; and when we

* Rom. viii. 33.

we ſincerely comply with theſe, he by the ſame goſpel, as his inſtrument, conſtitutes and pronounces us to be in a juſtified ſtate. He treats us as ſuch perſons now, and will declare us ſuch by the ſentence of our final judge in the great day. The goſpel is the rule of judgment. Thoſe who are abſolved or condemned by it now, ſhall be abſolved or condemned by Chriſt in that awful day. In vain are we juſtified by our ſelves or others, if he condemn us; for *he that judges us is the Lord*, and there is no appeal from that Tribunal.

Secondly, The only *meritorious cauſe* of our juſtification is the *perfect righteouſneſs and atonement* of Chriſt. *He trod the wine-preſs of his father's wrath alone, and of the people there was none with him.* He is a compleat Saviour, nothing muſt be joined with him in point of ſatisfaction and merit: he will not endure to have any thing in the creature ſet in competition or co-ordination with him. If he may not be our only Saviour, he will be no Saviour to us. How clear, full, and numerous are the ſcripture declarations upon this head? *As by the diſobedience of one many were made ſinners, ſo by the obedience of one many are made righteous. As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even ſo by the righteouſneſs of one the free gift came upon*

*upon all men to juſtification of life.** We are ſaid to be *juſtified through the redemption that is in Chriſt*, and *to have redemption through his blood, the forgiveneſs of ſin*, and *to be juſtified by his blood. God having ſet him forth a propitiation, through faith in his blood, declares his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins, that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus.*† *He is made of God to us righteouſneſs*, as well as *ſanctification*, and is *the Lord our righteouſneſs*, in whom we have both righteouſneſs and ſtrength. He *who knew no ſin, was made ſin*, or a ſin-offering for us, *that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.*‡ It was the ſin and ruin of the Jews, that *being ignorant of the righteouſneſs of God*, or of this way of juſtification appointed by God, they *went about to eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of their own, not ſubmitting themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God.*‖ It's evident the goſpel juſtification is not that of innocent creatures, for we can't deny the charge of guilt that is brought againſt us. We are all ſinners before God. Nor are we juſtified by a mere act of arbitrary grace, for the promiſes of forgiveneſs are founded upon a foregoing ſatisfaction made to the juſtice of God for ſin by the ſufferings and death of

* Rom. v. 18, 19.
† Rom. iii. 24, 25. Eph. i. 7. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 21.
‖ Rom. x. 3.

Chriſt. Hence his blood is ſtiled * *the blood of the everlaſting covenant*, and *all the promiſes are in him, yea and amen to the glory of God.*† Chriſt's righteouſneſs and atonement muſt be pleaded by thoſe who are intereſted in it, in bar to their condemnation, and as their right and title to pardon and favour. *Who is he that condemns? It is Chriſt that died, yea rather is riſen again. He was delivered for our offences, and roſe again for our juſtification*, and now *there is no condemnation to them that are in him.* This leads me to add,

Thirdly, *Faith* in Chriſt is the *appointed means* of obtaining an intereſt in his atonement, and ſo is the *condition* of our actual juſtification. The ground and foundation of this glorious privilege, and the way and means of intereſt in it, are two very different things. The former muſt be attributed to Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and to that alone; the latter to a vital and operative faith. The atonement in this way muſt be received before we can joy in God, as our reconciled God. They *who believe not are condemned already*,‡ and *the wrath of God abides upon them.* We frequently read of *being juſtified by faith*, and of the *righteouſneſs of God by faith*, and of *faith being imputed to us for righteouſneſs.* Chriſt was offered up a propitiatory

* Heb. xiii. 20. † 2 Col. i. 20.

‡ Rom. v. 1. iv. 22.

pitiatory atoning ſacrifice on the croſs for ſin, in our room and ſtead. This ſacrifice has been accepted of the Father on our behalf. Upon our ſincere compliance with the terms of the goſpel, we are intereſted in it, and receive ſaving advantage by it. It's by faith that awakened convinced ſinners flee for refuge to the hope ſet before them.

The faith that juſtifies is neither a dead notion in the head, nor a groundleſs confidence and perſuaſion that our ſins are pardoned, and we are in a juſtified ſtate: But it's a cordial acceptance of Chriſt in all his offices, and a reſignation to him as Lord Redeemer. It's a *faith* that *works by love*, that *purifies the heart*, is our *victory over the world*, and is productive of goſpel obedience. St. *Paul* * and St. *James* do not really contradict each other, when the one ſays, *Abraham was juſtified by faith, and not by works*, and the other that *he was juſtified by works and not by faith only*.† *Paul* does not ſpeak of the ſame kind of works that *James* does, nor *James* of the ſame kind of faith that *Paul* does. St. *James*'s works are ſuch as flow from a vital principle of faith, but St. *Paul*'s are the works of the law, ſuch as were done without faith, and ſuch as were truſted to as meritorious in the ſight of God, and ſo ſubſtituted in the room of Chriſt and his righteouſneſs. In like manner

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* Rom. iv. 2, 3. † James ii. 24.

the faith St. *James* ſpeaks of is only a dead notion, whereas that of St. *Paul*'s is a vital principle, productive of goſpel holineſs and obedience. But neither our faith or beſt works have any part in that which belongs to the Redeemer's office, much leſs muſt any pretended human ſatisfactions and merit, mix with his merit and atonement.

From this account of juſtifying faith, we ſee how unſafe and dangerous the Popiſh doctrine of ſacramental juſtification muſt be. Biſhop *Burnet* in his expoſition of the thirty-nine Articles takes notice how very lax their notions in this reſpect are. His words are theſe: *That the uſe of the ſacraments, if men do not put a bar to them, and if they have only imperfect acts of ſorrow accompanying them, does ſo far compleat thoſe weak acts as to juſtify us.* This he juſtly reckons among the moſt miſchievous of all their practical errors, as it tends to enervate all religion, and to make the ſacraments of the nature of a charm, which if they can be come at, tho' with ever ſo ſlight a preparation, will make up all defects. Thus thoſe ordinances that were given us to raiſe and heighten our repentance and faith, are ſubſtituted in the room of them, and become engines to encourage ſloth and impenitency. --- I ſhall only add,

Fourthly, That the *ultimate deſign* of God in our juſtification, is, the diſplaying and magnifying

magnifying the *freeneſs* and *riches* of his own *grace*. Hence we read of being *juſtified by his grace*, and that *we have redemption through his blood, according to the riches of his grace*; and that it *is of faith*, that it might be *by grace*. The whole contrivance is admirably adapted to advance this divine perfection. It was *grace* that did admit of a ſubſtitute in our room and ſtead, for God might in ſtrict juſtice have inſiſted upon our ſuffering the puniſhment of ſin in our own perſons. It's *grace* that has provided and accepted the ranſom for us, that has conſtituted the new covenant, and ſettled the connection between ſincere repentance and faith on the one hand, and pardon and juſtification on the other; and it's *grace* that enables us to comply with the reaſonable terms propoſed; ſo that the *grace* of God is as free and rich as is conſiſtent with the other perfections of his nature and government. If we were to be juſtified by our own works, and theſe were perfect and meritorious, we ſhould have wherewith to glory in ourſelves; whereas God will have no fleſh to glory in his ſight and preſence, but *he that glorieth muſt glory in the Lord*. In Chriſt alone ſhall *all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified, and ſhall glory*. Thus have I given you a ſummary account of what I take to be the ſubſtance of the Proteſtant doctrine of juſtification; and as far as it differs from the

the Popiſh doctrine, we have clearly the language of ſcripture on our ſide. This account does moſt effectually advance the honour of divine grace, and of the Redeemer's merit, and is moſt for the relief and comfort of awakened convinced ſinners. - - - - I ſhall aſſiſt your improvement of this ſubject in a few words of advice, and ſo conclude.

Be very *thankful* for the *Reformation* from Popery, and that you live in thoſe times and places where it prevails. When ſerious and inquiſitive Chriſtians were allowed the free uſe of the ſcriptures, they ſoon got much clearer light into this, and ſeveral other important doctrines, than they ever had before. *Stand faſt therefore in the liberty wherewith Chriſt has made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Take heed leſt being led away by the error of the wicked, you fall from your own ſtedfaſtneſs. Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* The more you know of him, and of his infinite fulneſs and merit, the more you will abhor the principles of Popery, which are a vile uſurpation of his rights, honour, and dignity.

Let Proteſtants make it evident, that they are as much *friends to good works* as the Papiſts can be, and do as much abound in them. Tho' we dare not truſt to them as the

the meritorious cauſe of our pardon and acceptance here, and of eternal life hereafter, yet they are the beſt evidences of our preſent pardon, and the qualifications of our final bleſſedneſs. Where the love of God and man doth really rule in the heart, it will make men more truly charitable and beneficent, than any proud conceit of merit can do. Let not the profeſſors of a falſe religion outdo you in works of ſubſtantial piety and goodneſs. *Let the rich in this world be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate, feed the hungry, cloath the naked,* and in this way cauſe their light to ſhine before men. It will be our ſhame and reproach, if any ſhould be under a temptation to exchange the Proteſtant religion for Popery, as the more kind and compaſſionate religion of the two. But then,

When you have done your beſt, own yourſelves to be *unprofitable ſervants.* Fly to the blood of Chriſt, and the mercy of God in him, for pardon and acceptance. That you may never be tempted to place an undue confidence in any of your own duties, endeavour to be better acquainted with God and yourſelves. Study more the purity and extent of his righteous law. Frequently compare your hearts and lives with it. Bring yourſelves often before the bar of your own conſcience ; if that condemn you, how will you

you bear God's enlightened tribunal? Keep death and judgment much in your view: In the ſerious thought and approach of that awful day, you will be convinced you need ſomething better than your own merits to truſt to and depend on. *Bellarmine* himſelf could ſay, that it was *ſafeſt*, conſidering our manifold defects, to truſt to Chriſt's righteouſneſs. Now that which is ſafeſt to die by, muſt be the ſafeſt to live by. He may juſtly reject thoſe at death, who neglect him in the time of life. Whatever others may ſay or do, let us all abide by this, as an undoubted truth, that *it is grace which reigns through righteouſneſs unto eternal life by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* To whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

The Popish *doctrine of* PURGATORY *repugnant to the* Scripture *account of* remission *through the blood of* CHRIST.

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT

SALTERS-HALL,

MARCH 27, 1735.

By *J. EARLE*, D. D.

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IV. Anſwer what may be objected againſt the concluſiveneſs of the argument propoſed.

I. I would fairly ſtate the true ſenſe and import of the words.

1. By the *blood of Chriſt*, we are to underſtand his death, which was the natural conſequence of ſhedding his blood. And by this manner of expreſſing our Lord's death is ſignify'd his dying as an expiatory ſacrifice, and ſo anſwering the types exhibited in the law of *Moſes*; concerning which the author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* ſpeaks very fully, and particularly in the ninth chapter, to which I refer you.

2. By the *cleanſing* here attributed to the blood of Chriſt is meant directly and immediately a *ſacrifical purgation*. I do not exclude a moral one as conſequent upon it: for no doubt we owe our whole ſalvation to the *precious blood of Chriſt*, who was deliver'd up to death for us as *a lamb without blemiſh and without ſpot*, that he might *redeem us from our vain converſation*, 1 Pet. i. 19. He *gave himſelf for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himſelf a peculiar people zealous of good works*, Titus ii. 14. His *blood purgeth the conſcience from dead works, that we may ſerve the living God*, Heb. ix. 14. Thus our *hearts are purify'd by faith*, and Chriſt is *of God made to us ſanctification*, *Acts* xv. 9. 1 *Cor.* i. 30.

But I ſay the expreſſion in the text ſeems *directly* to import a *ſacrifical purgation* or being pardon'd by way of atonement, or in view to

to an expiatory ſacrifice; ſuch a *forgiveneſs of ſins* as is a *cleanſing from all unrighteouſneſs* by the blood of the Son of God; upon which account God is repreſented as *faithful and juſt* in thus forgiving, *ver.* 9. according to that of St. *Paul*, Rom. iii. 26. *That he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him which believeth in Jeſus.* However, the cleanſing ſpoken of in the text, and the next verſe but one, muſt I think refer to the remiſſion of ſin, becauſe the expreſſions have a plain reference to a ſacrifice. And theſe places in St. *John* are parallel to that of the author to the *Hebrews*, ix. 14. Where the *blood* of Chriſt is ſaid to *purge the conſcience* from dead works. This the marginal references of the *Vulgate* ſhew to be the ſenſe of the *Romiſh* divines. And very juſtly; for it is the ſame phraſeology in both Epiſtles, and the ſenſe of it is very evidently ſacrifical in that to the *Hebrews*. For, as Dr. *Whitby* obſerves, "τὸ "καθαρίζειν here, as the compariſon clearly "ſhews, being in ſenſe the ſame with ἁγιά-"ζειν in the verſe preceding, muſt ſignify "the cleanſing of the conſcience not *from* "*the inclination to ſin*, *by* the Holy Spirit, but "from *the guilt of ſin*, by the blood ſhed for "the remiſſion of it. And, ſaith he, this is "the conſtant ſenſe of the word καθαρίζειν "in the Old Teſtament, when join'd with "ἀπὸ ἁμαρτιῶν. Hence then it follows, "that the *dead works* from which their *con-*"*ſcience* was to be thus cleanſed muſt ſignify "works which *deſerved death*, &c."

Thus

Thus I underſtand theſe words as expreſſing what we have in many other places of ſcripture, which it is not at preſent neceſſary to mention.-- It may be ſufficient to refer you to that of St. *Paul*, Eph. i. 7. *In whom we have redemption thro' his blood, the forgiveneſs of ſins.* Of this forgiveneſs I take St. *John* here to ſpeak.

3. The *perſons* thus ſaid to be cleanſed or forgiven their ſins, are, no doubt, believers, all that are truly ſo, who *with the heart believe.* According to that of St. *Paul*, Rom. x. 10. *With the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs. Remiſſion of ſins is thro' faith in Chriſt's blood*, Rom. iii. 25. And *the righteouſneſs of God is by faith in Jeſus Chriſt unto all, and whoſoever believeth in him ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins*, Acts x. 43. So chap. xiii. 38, 39. *Be it known to you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you forgiveneſs of ſins, and by him all that believe are juſtify'd from all things*, &c. *i. e.* all true believers, whoſe character is, that they *walk in the light*, and not *in darkneſs*, and prove their faith by their works; for we deny a dead faith to be juſtifying, whatever our enemies may pretend.

This doctrine of the forgiveneſs of ſins for the ſake of Chriſt, upon faith profeſſed in baptiſm, was always an article of the Chriſtian creed. I ſay *for the ſake of Chriſt:* " Unto " which conſideration (ſays the learned author " of the critical Hiſtory of the Creed) the wa- " ter in baptiſm, and the waſhing our bodies " therewith, directs us; ſince it is impoſſible " the ſprinkling of that ſhould purge away

" the

" the ſtain and guilt of ſin in any other way " and manner than as it hath reference to, " and is a repreſentation of the blood of the " *Lamb of God*, which was ſpilt to take away " the ſins of the world. For water under the " evangelical diſpenſation is in itſelf no more " available to the purging of the conſcience, " and the pacifying divine wrath, than the " blood of bulls and goats was under the *Mo-* " *ſaical* and legal œconomy." *p.* 369.

The perſons thus cleanſed, I ſay, are true believers, ſuch as believe with the heart, and make a free profeſſion of their faith, and live anſwerably to it. Of theſe it is ſaid,

4. That the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth them *from all ſin, all manner of ſin*, as it is expreſſed *Matt.* xii. 13. excepting only the *blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, which is inconſiſtent with faith in Chriſt. By him all that believe are *juſtified from all things:* all ſins of whatever kind or degree, and however circumſtanced and diſtinguiſhed; whether committed before that faith whereby we are juſtified, or after it. The forgiveneſs of all and all manner of ſins before men's converſion to God by Chriſt, was never denied (that I can find) by any profeſſed Chriſtians. But beſides, all ſins committed after *the waſhing of regeneration*, and *renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*, tho' never ſo ſcandalous and offenſive, are, upon renewal of faith and repentance, pardonable both by God and the church. This indeed was deny'd by the *Novatians*, who declared, " that there was *no mercy for* " *them who ſhould fall after baptiſm*, at leaſt,

" that

" that the church could not forgive them, and " receive them into communion again, but " muſt for ever exclude them her ſociety, and " leave them to the judgment of God." In oppoſition to which opinion the article of forgiveneſs of ſins is thought to have been added to the creed in the time of St. *Cyprian.* See Crit. Hiſt. p. 360.

Now this ſcripture doctrine, own'd by the primitive doctors of the church, whom we call *Fathers*, is the doctrine of the Reformed or *Proteſtant* churches, *viz.* That to true believers all their ſins are freely forgiven by God, upon the account of the ſacrifice which Chriſt offer'd when he died by ſhedding his blood on the croſs, and which he ever lives to plead in their behalf. Thus it is ſaid, that *the blood of Jeſus Chriſt the ſon of God cleanſeth from all ſin.*

II. I am next to ſhew what the *church of Rome* teaches upon this head or article of the forgiveneſs of ſins. And here, to do her juſtice, ſhe does own,

1. That Chriſt did *die for our ſins according to the ſcripture*; that his blood is infinitely meritorious; and even ſay, that one drop of his blood is ſufficient to redeem mankind,----whatever they mean by it-----

2. That all true believers, for the ſake of Chriſt's meritorious death, are deliver'd from eternal death, and have a ſure title to everlaſting life.

3. They ſay, that ſuch as die immediately upon their baptiſm, and all that ſuffer martyrdom,

dom, and ſuch as are fully purged before death, go directly to heaven, and enjoy the beatifical viſion, not waiting for it till the day of judgment.

4. But they pretend, that ſuch as die guilty of leſſer ſins, which they call *venial*, before they have repented for theſe ordinary failings; and ſuch as having been formerly guilty of greater ſins, have not made full atonement for them to the divine juſtice; that ſuch muſt go to *purgatory*: which, they tell us, is a middleſtate of ſouls which depart this life in God's grace, yet not without ſome leſſer ſtains or guilt of puniſhment, which retards them from entering into heaven. (I give you this account in the very words of a little piece, which is induſtriouſly ſpread about at preſent, called a *Profeſſion of Catholick Faith*, &c.)

5. Tho' the particular place where theſe ſouls ſuffer, or the quality of the torments which they ſuffer, be not decided by the church, yet it is owned they do ſuffer, and are in torment; nay the catechiſm ſet out by order of the council of *Trent*, calls it a * *purgatory-fire*; and ſome of their allowed doctors repreſent the ſufferings there, as cauſed by the *ſame fire as torments the damned in hell:* yea *Bellarmine* owns, that almoſt all their divines teach, *that the damned and the ſouls in purgatory are tormented in the ſame fire, and in the ſame place.*

6. They do not pretend that theſe ſufferings are for their *moral* purification, (as the afflictions of this life are allowed to be) but for their

* Cat. ad Paroch.

cleanſing in a way of *ſatisfaction* to the juſtice of God. So they mean by purgatory, not (as one wou'd at firſt hearing it imagine, and perhaps many miſtakingly apprehend) a place or ſtate in which the remainders of vitious habits or wrong inclinations are to be worn out or purged away---for this they abſolutely deny--but a place in which they are not to repent or be amended, but to ſatisfy; and their purgatory-fire purges the conſcience from venial ſins, (and ſome remainder of the guilt of mortal ones too) as the blood of Chriſt does from *dead works*; that is, makes ſatisfaction for them to the juſtice of God.

7. They ſay, that ſouls in this diſtreſs are helped by the ſuffrages of the faithful; that is, by the prayers and alms offered for them, and principally by the holy ſacrifice of the maſs, (this is the account given by the forementioned author) and Papal indulgences, *&c.*

8. They make this doctrine (for the ſubſtance of it) an article of faith, and enforce it with an anathema, *i. e.* curſe thoſe that do not believe it, or at leaſt all that have the courage to ſay they do not. For thus runs the 30th *canon* of the ſixth *ſeſſion* of the *council* of *Trent*. " If any ſhall ſay, that after receiving the " grace of juſtification, any penitent ſinner has " his fault ſo forgiven, and the guilt of eter- " nal puniſhment taken away, that there re- " mains no guilt of temporal puniſhment to be " diſcharged either in this world, or that to " come, in purgatory, before he can enter in-

" to

" to the kingdom of heaven, let him be ac-
" curſed."

Thus I have given you a brief account of that purgatory, which the church of *Rome* obliges her people to believe upon pain of damnation. I am now

III. To *argue* againſt it from its *repugnancy* to the *ſcripture doctrine* of cleanſing from ſin by the blood of Chriſt, as before propoſed: of which you have heard more largely in a late diſcourſe of being juſtified freely by the grace of God, thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Which is not only a truth, but an eſſential article of the Chriſtian faith. See *Rom.* x. 3. 1 *Cor.* xv. 3. *Gal.* v. 4. Now to ſhew the oppoſition of this doctrine of purgatory to that of juſtification by the free grace of God in Chriſt, I ſhall obſerve ſeveral things.

(1.) This doctrine derogates from thoſe *perfections of God*, which in the work of redemption by Chriſt he deſigned to magnify----as

1. His *goodneſs*, grace, and mercy. This was it, that moved him *not to ſpare his own Son, but deliver him up for us all*, Rom. viii. 32. Thus Epheſ. i. 6, 7. *To the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved: In whom we have redemption thro' his blood, the forgiveneſs of ſins according to the riches of his grace. Herein God commendeth his love to us, that while we were yet ſinners Chriſt died for us*, Rom. v. 8. So 1 John iv. 10. *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved*

us, and ſent his Son to be the propitiation for our ſins.

Now what a reflection is it upon the love and grace of God, that after ſuch a propitiation has been made, and ſuch a ſatisfaction given, he ſhould inſiſt upon the ſufferings of thoſe, who *by faith in Jeſus Chriſt are all his children*; and thoſe too ſo terrible ones, and ſo long as may, for ought the patrons of purgatory can tell, amount to ten thouſand times more than ever what all the ſaints upon earth ſuffer'd in the fleſh comes to. Does this conſiſt with the account we have even in the *Old Teſtament*, of his being the *Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering and abundant in goodneſs, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, and tranſgreſſion, and ſin?* Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. Do we not read of his being *gracious, and full of compaſſion, ſlow to anger*, and *ready to forgive*, and *plenteous in mercy?* Pſal. cxlv. 8. lxxxvi, 5. Are we not told, that *he does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men?* Lam. iii. 33. How moving are thoſe expreſſions, *Hoſ.* xi. 8. *How ſhall I give thee up, Ephraim? How ſhall I deliver thee, Iſrael? How ſhall I make thee as Admah? How ſhall I ſet thee as Zeboim? My heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together!* Does God expreſs himſelf ſo tenderly when his poor creatures are expoſed to temporal judgments, and give reaſon for that exclamation of the prophet, *How great is his goodneſs?* Zech. ix. 17: And can we imagine that thoſe who are reconciled to him by the

the death of his Son, and juſtify'd by his blood, can be tormented by him in a future ſtate after ſo terrible a manner? In the *New Teſtament* we are told, that *God is love*, 1 John iv. 16. And is it to be thought he will ſo ſeverely correct his children; *not for their good:* for the Papiſts do not pretend there is any ſpiritual improvement in purgatory: but merely *to receive ſatisfaction* for their faults; yea ſuch "ſmall "faults as the beſt of his ſervants are more "or leſs liable to:" * and that after his dear Son had *born their ſins in his own body on the tree?* Is this the idea the church of *Rome* would give us of him who *is good to all*, and *whoſe tender mercies are over all his works?* Pſal. cxlv. 9. Is this conſiſtent with what we are told, that *like as a father pitieth his children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him?* Do earthly parents, that have any bowels or underſtanding, deal thus with their children? Or if ſometimes they do, can it be ſuppoſed that our heavenly Father is ſuch a one as they are? Good God! what difference do theſe people make between thee, and thoſe *fathers of the fleſh*, who correct their children *after their own pleaſure!*

I am well aware that the *goodneſs* of God is not to be impeach'd, *merely* becauſe he puniſhes. But then I am alſo as ſure as I can be of any thing, that he never afflicts but when the caſe neceſſarily requires it, or the affliction may turn to the ſufferer's account; neither of which can be the caſe in this purgatory-fire. God *may*, without any derogation from his more

* Profeſſ. p. 34.

more awful attributes, omit to exact any thing from those for whom Christ died, by way of satisfaction, and therefore surely he *will*. And as for any benefit arising to the sufferers in purgatory, the *Papists* do not pretend to it; they own they cannot there merit, nor be improved. What benefit may arise from their sufferings to the *temporalities* of the church is another thing; but (I am desirous it should be noted and remembred) to the poor wretches in that place of torment no benefit can accrue from their being there: And therefore as neither the honour of God's perfections and government require it, nor their own advantage, I must again say, it seems inconsistent with that benignity of the divine nature, which he has taught us so much to magnify.

2. This doctrine derogates from the *wisdom* of God, which he design'd to magnify in the work of redemption thro' his Son's blood; *wherein he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence*, Eph. i. 8. I know the turn given to this text by some writers. But a * commentator, who is in every body's hands, in his notes upon it, has said a good deal to shew the wisdom of this dispensation of God in sending his Son into the world to suffer for our sins, and by his sufferings to make an atonement for them. I shall only refer you to him, and take it for granted at present; especially seeing the patrons of purgatory do not deny, that the doctrine of Christ crucified is the *power* of God and his *wisdom* too, 1 *Cor.* i. 24. Upon which place

* Dr. *Whitby* in loc.

place their own *Eſtius* ſaith, " which [wiſdom] " he [God] ſhew'd, in that he redeemed his " elect by the humiliation and death of " Chriſt."

Now is it to the reputation of any wiſdom, to uſe means that are wholly needleſs to anſwer the ends in view, and without which they could be every whit as well reach'd? Is not making ſatisfaction to the juſtice and law of God the end of Chriſt's ſhedding his blood? Is not that a ſufficient atonement, and every way adapted to the purpoſe of expiation, without the aid of any other method of ſatisfaction? I hope this will not be denied by thoſe who have ſpoken ſo magnificently of *one ſingle drop* of the precious blood which our Lord ſhed. What, is not the blood of God a plenary ſatisfaction? The church of *Rome* holds the full and proper divinity of our bleſſed Saviour; and upon that principle can they think it not enough, that *he was made ſin*, [*a ſin-offering*] *for us, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him*, 1 Cor. v. 21. but after all, we muſt ſatisfy for ourſelves in purgatory-fire? Let me deſire them to conſider, whether this does not highly reflect upon the wiſdom of God, that he ſhould *lay upon his Son the iniquity of us all*, and then make us either bear a great deal of our own burden, or commute for it with *trifles*. I ſay *trifles*, for ſo are all the equivalents which the eſpouſers of purgatory propoſe.

Men may be helped *there*, it ſeems, (and therefore to be ſure may be kept *from thence*) " by the ſuffrages of the faithful, that is by " the

" the prayers and alms offered for them:" That is, in ſhort, by giving money to the church and its poor: and principally by the ſacrifice of the Maſs, which the prieſt muſt be well paid for offering.---I do not call prayers and alms a trifle *abſolutely*; but when they pretend to come in aid of the perfect ſacrifice, which Chriſt made, they are *worſe* than trifles. As for the ſacrifice of the maſs, we muſt take leave to treat that in no other manner, till they have proved their famous doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation. Otherwiſe, ſurely, ſaying a few *Latin* words over a piece of bread and a cup of wine, and preſenting them before an altar, is too mean a thing to ſerve the purpoſes it pretends to anſwer.

Would a wiſe man, when he has received all proper and reaſonable ſatisfaction for an offence, inſiſt upon what can ſerve no manner of purpoſe? And can we think the wiſdom of God will permit him to demand, beſide a full price which he has received from his Son, an addition of things which cannot increaſe the ſum a ſingle mite? Is this the notion theſe men have of the *only wiſe God?*

3. This doctrine of purgatory carries in it a reflection upon the *juſtice* of God. If any thing could be added to the price with which we are bought, can juſtice inſiſt upon it, when he has accepted the ranſom? He might have choſen whether he would admit a ſubſtitution or vicarious puniſhment: and he had a right to inſiſt upon ſuch limitations as were proper in order to ſinners having the benefit of ſuch a diſ-

penſation

penſation. This he has done in ſettling the covenant of grace, which is called the *everlaſting covenant*, and is ratify'd in the Redeemer's blood. The ſum of which is, that all true believers ſhall be ſaved from wrath, and live for ever, *John* iii. 16. *Whoſoever believeth in him ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* Now of the ſatisfaction which Chriſt made, under the limitations agreed to, God has declared his approbation and acceptance by raiſing Chriſt from the dead, and ſending forth his Spirit to confirm the teſtimony of his ambaſſadors, *to wit, that God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes*, 2 Cor. v. 19. And it follows, *ver.* 21. *For he hath made him to be ſin for us who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* And all this without any limitation, but this, that they believe and profeſs, and *walk in the light*, i. e. be holy in heart and life. Not one word is ſaid of believers making ſatisfaction for themſelves in a *middle ſtate.* We are aſſured that *there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus.* Rom. viii. 1. And therefore juſtice itſelf can require nothing more beſide what was ſtipulated. So that I ſay, the very juſtice of God itſelf, which was deſign'd to be honour'd by this diſpenſation, is ſlurred by repreſenting him as making farther demands. We are bought with a price which our Redeemer has paid, and the payment of it ſolemnly acknowledged, and accepted in the behalf of all his living members, who bring forth fruit unto God: And can juſtice demand more?

If it be no wrong to us, ſurely it would be injurious to his Son, with whom no *doubt* a righteous God will keep covenant; and it would be injuſtice not to do it. ---- But this leads me to obſerve, that,

4. This doctrine ſlurs the divine *truth* and ſincerity. God is a *God of truth*; and in the ſufferings of his Son, he fulfilled the promiſe made to the fathers. All the promiſes of forgiveneſs under the Old Teſtament, had ſurely a reference to the Meſſiah, (as no man can doubt, that reads the 53[d] of *Iſaiah.)* Now how full and ſtrong do they run! *Forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin.* Tranſgreſſion is ſaid to be forgiven, ſin cover'd, iniquity not imputed, *Pſal.* xxxii. 1. *With the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. And he ſhall redeem Iſrael from all his iniquities,* cxxx. 7, 8. *Tho' their ſins be as ſcarlet they ſhall be as white as ſnow, tho' they be red like crimſon they ſhall be as wool,* Iſa. i. 18. *He will have mercy; he will abundantly pardon,* lv. 7. We read of the *greatneſs* and *multitudes* of his *tender* mercies. *I will,* ſaith God, *forgive their iniquities, and remember their ſin no more,* Jer. xxxi. 34. And in the prophet *Micah,* vii. 18, *&c.* (who foretold where Chriſt ſhould be born) we have a ſtrong paſſage, *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſion of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, becauſe he delighteth in mercy; he will turn again; he will have compaſſion upon us; he will ſubdue our iniquities, and thou wilt caſt all our*

ſins

ſins into the depths of the ſea. And then it follows, *Thou wilt perform thy truth to Jacob.* (I hope the Papiſts will bear with this profuſion of quotations out of the Old Teſtament, ſince they make uſe of ſo many in defence of their purgatory-fire.) Now, *Rom.* iii. 4. *Let God be true, but every man a liar.* Accordingly, *now the righteouſneſs of God without the law is manifeſted, being witneſſed by the law and the prophets; even the righteouſneſs of God which is by faith of Jeſus Chriſt unto all and upon all them that believe,* &c. 21, 22. *What ſaid the ſcripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteouſneſs. Nor was it written for his ſake alone, but for us alſo, if we believe on him that raiſed up Jeſus from the dead, who was delivered for our offences and raiſed again for our juſtification,* Rom. iv. 23. *Thoſe things which God before had ſhewed by the mouth of all his prophets that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer, he hath ſo fulfilled,* Acts iii. 18.

Now if God had promiſed an abſolute and plenary forgiveneſs of ſin thro' Chriſt, to all that believe, *repent* and are *converted,* (ver. 19.) does it not reflect upon his faithfulneſs, if when the affair comes forth, there appears ſuch a reſerve as was never taken notice of in the original declaration of grant, nor ſpecified in the actual conveyance. If the goſpel, after its publication by thoſe to whom God bare witneſs, be declared to be according to the tenor of the ancient evangelical promiſes to the fathers, without ſpecifying any alteration; does this do honour to God's truth and ſincerity,

if it appears that there was a limitation unknown and unthought of by the church of old, and not plainly ſignified upon the opening a new diſpenſation?

And this ſeems by the way, to be a ſpecial hardſhip upon believers under this new diſpenſation, that they are liable to the torments of purgatory-fire, which our adverſaries will not ſay was prepar'd for the Old Teſtament ſaints: There having been, it ſeems, a *Limbus* appointed for them; in which, according to the account they give of the matter, there was no torment.

So that in ſhort the doctrine of purgatory ſeems to be contrary to all our notions of the mercy, wiſdom, juſtice and faithfulneſs of God, which he deſigned to honour in the goſpel ſalvation.

(2.) Farther, this doctrine is *diſhonourable to Chriſt*, who is, by his all-cleanſing blood, *the propitiation for our ſins*, 1 John ii. 2. St. *John* tells us, that *all men ſhould honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*, v. 23. The proper and full divinity of the Son is not deny'd by the church of *Rome*. So that any doctrine derogatory to him is equally criminal as if it concern'd the Father. Now the apoſtle *Paul*, (whom the council of *Trent* makes the author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews)* tells us, that Chriſt has by himſelf purged our Sins, i. 3. That he *put away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf*, ix. 26. That *by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified*, x. 14. *i. e.* "completely expiated the ſins of them "that

" that are ſanctified thro' faith in his blood, " procuring the remiſſion of ſins."* And of this, ſaith he, the *Holy Ghoſt alſo is a witneſs; for after he had ſaid before, This is the covenant*, &c. he adds, *Their ſins and their iniquities I will remember no more*, ver. 15, 16, 17.

Therefore any other methods of expiation pretended to are a reflection upon the atonement which Chriſt made as inſufficient. And I would intreat the Romaniſts to conſider whether *his* blood is not ſufficient to cleanſe from all ſin, without the torments of purgatory, or the poor equivalents that are to ſuperſede them. They and we agree in being amaz'd at it as infinite condeſcenſion, that God ſhould be manifeſted in the fleſh, and in that fleſh bear our ſins in order to their expiation: and can it enter into our minds, that the atonement *he* made ſhould not of itſelf anſwer all purpoſes to true Chriſtians, without there being any manner of room for the merits of *ſinners*, (for ſo all the ſaints in their beſt eſtate on earth were) in order to our deliverance from that torment by which they muſt otherwiſe expiate their own offences?

Is this honouring Chriſt to tell us of a ſtate of torment, which thoſe for whom he died muſt go to, and tarry an unknown time, till they are reliev'd by the ſuffrages of the faithful, in order to ſatisfy for thoſe errors for which the Son of God has ſhed his moſt precious blood? Is it to the honour of Chriſt that he cannot, or will not ſave the members of his

* *Whitby* in loc.

his own body, (which all true Chriſtians are) from the whole demerit of their ſins, without the aid of ſuch merits as thoſe of a *Thomas a Becket*, diſpenſed out of a treaſury kept by an *Alexander*, a *Boniface*, or a *Julius?* And yet thus it ſeems it muſt be, that either true penitents muſt make full atonement for their greater ſins here, or go to purgatory to effect it when they die. And ſome of God's beſt ſervants, if they happen to die ſuddenly before they have repented of an idle word, (which they give as an inſtance of * *venial ſin*,) muſt have the ſame lot.

Bleſſed *Jeſus!* Is this the *love* of thine *which paſſeth knowledge?* Is this what thy apoſtle calls thy *unſearchable riches?* Is this the *grace* which he celebrates, that *tho' thou waſt rich, yet for our ſake thou becameſt poor*; that *we, thro' thy poverty, might be made rich?* Was this the meaning of that call of thine, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you reſt*, that they ſhould ſtill be liable to a yoke ſo much heavier than that of Jewiſh rites and ceremonies, even a ſort of temporary hell? Is it thus, that the *Lamb of God takes away the ſins of the world*, and that thy *blood cleanſeth us from all ſin*, that after all our faith and

* The author of the *profeſſion of catholick faith*, &c. ſpeaks cautiouſly. But if any would know what exceeding great crimes are reckon'd but ſlight and venial faults by the Popiſh doctrine, let them conſult the 8th chapter of a book entitled, *The practical divinity of the Papiſts diſcover'd to be deſtructive of chriſtianity and men's ſouls*, publiſh'd in the year 1676, by Mr. *David Clarkſon*, who was ejected from *Mortlack* in *Surry* for non-conformity, and preached the 12th ſermon in the *morning exerciſes againſt Popery* concerning juſtification.

and proof given of its being genuine, we muſt make atonement for our ſelves here; or if even providence itſelf by ſudden death, or the loſs of reaſon, prevents our doing it here, muſt do it in the horrors of a purgatory? Haſt thou ſo paid our debt, that there is a large part of it which we muſt diſcharge our ſelves, or our friends for us, before we can get to heaven, or elſe muſt be caſt into a priſon from whence we cannot go till we have *paid the uttermoſt farthing*, Matt. v. 26. which text the *Profeſſion*, &c. alledges for a proof of purgatory, and pretends the authority of St. *Cyprian*: of which hereafter.

(3.) This purgatory-fire is *diſhonourable to the Holy Spirit*, whoſe office is to apply the redemption purchaſed by Chriſt, and whom the church of *Rome* owns to "be with the Father "and the Son together worſhipped and glo-"rified."----He was promiſed to *guide* the apoſtles (who were appointed to publiſh the goſpel ſalvation) *into all truth*. But this important doctrine of purgatory either was not revealed to them, or elſe they *ſhunned to declare* this part of the *counſel of God*, as far as we can find in their writings; and that it was handed down from them by any unwritten tradition, we muſt have better evidence than has yet been produced before we can believe it. And ſure it is a diſhonour to the Holy Ghoſt to ſuppoſe him to direct a company of men (whom they call a *council)* to anathematize thoſe who do not receive what was not written in thoſe ſcriptures which were given by his inſpiration; eſpecially

if

if ſuch a doctrine ſtands in full and direct repugnancy to an eſſential article of the Chriſtian faith, as this doctrine of purgatory does; at leaſt it ſeems to do ſo: and can we ſuppoſe the Holy Ghoſt would no where give us any account of this middle ſtate of ſouls which depart this life *in God's grace*, and yet *into torment?* That he ſhould mention heaven and hell ſo expreſsly (when a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments appeared reaſonable to many that had no revelation) and at the ſame time ſhould take no notice of this ſame purgatory-fire, which cannot be known but by revelation; and that he ſhould give no manner of directions about the method of eſcaping or getting out of it? And thus we muſt ſpeak till the partizans of *Rome* can agree to point us out to ſome ſcripture that ſpeaks plainly to their purpoſe.

Beſides, is it not diſhonourable to the Holy Spirit, to repreſent his work in the application of what Chriſt has purchaſed to believers as imperfect? Is not what he does, when he works faith in us, and ſo unites us to Chriſt, and makes us *partakers of the divine nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4. ſufficient to qualify us for the full remiſſion of ſin purchaſed by Chriſt, without our own ſufferings in purgatory, by which it is pretended that the merits of Chriſt are applied? Surely there is enough in what the Spirit works in believers to put them in a condition to receive the full benefit of what Chriſt has purchaſed.---- And we ought to think ſo, ſeeing faith and repentance are all that is mention'd in ſcripture

ture as neceſſary to this purpoſe, and no notice taken of other ſatisfactions.

I ſhall only add, Is it to the honour of the bleſſed Spirit of God, that he ſhould encourage believers in ſeveral places of ſcripture to hope for a freedom from all uneaſineſs, and an admiſſion into paradiſe, upon the diſſolution of their earthly tabernacles, when at the ſame time they are expoſed to a middle ſtate of torment, in which they may ſuffer more intenſe pains than ever they felt on earth, even when they were *weary with their groaning, all night have made their bed to ſwim, and watered their couch with their tears*, Pſal. vi. 6. But this leads me to another head,

(4.) This doctrine directly tends to ſpoil much of the comfort, which ſhould ariſe in believers minds from a ſenſe of their reconciliation to God, thro' the blood of his Son; and conſequently to abate the gratitude they ſhould expreſs, and the freedom they ſhould uſe in their approaches to their heavenly Father. Of this the apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* v. 1----5. *Therefore being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. By whom alſo we have acceſs, by faith, into this grace wherein we ſtand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only ſo, but we glory in tribulations alſo, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not aſhamed, becauſe the love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt, which is given to us.* From this, and ſuch like paſſages in ſcripture, all that are in the grace

of God, (as every one that after death goes to purgatory is ſuppoſed to be) may juſtly take great comfort; but what a damp muſt it caſt upon their ſpirits, when they think of the ſatiſfaction they are to make in the purgatory-fire? And how can they, as otherwiſe they might, *joy in God thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom they have now receiv'd the atonement?* Rom. v. 11. Chriſtian joy is the beſt friend to gratitude, and all the proper expreſſions of it in the *fruits of righteouſneſs*, and therefore the apoſtle would have believers *rejoice evermore. Rejoice*, ſaith he, *in the Lord always; and again I ſay rejoice*, Phil. iv. 4. And I cannot help thinking, that a doctrine which has ſuch an unfriendly aſpect upon the comfort of believers, is by no means dictated by the *Holy Ghoſt the Comforter.*

It certainly abates the relief we ſhould find againſt the ſlaviſh fear of death, when we think that tho' Chriſt has *overcome him that had the power of death, that is, the devil*; yet for ought we know, or can know, without ſome ſort of revelation, we may happen to lie in purgatory till the day of judgment; ſo muſt loſe the comfort of all thoſe texts that would encourage us to look on death with pleaſure, and make us *deſire to be diſſolved, and be with Chriſt* in paradiſe; ſince unleſs we are not only in the grace of God, but ſomething very extraordinary too, we ſhall not be ſo happy as the penitent thief, who was with Chriſt in paradiſe the day he expired; but may perhaps lie a great while in extremity of pain, even as long as our bodies

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ſhall continue in the grave. If this be *dying in the Lord*, and *ſleeping in Jeſus*, and the *reſt* which good men are to expect when they put off this tabernacle, the ſcriptures have been ſtrangely miſunderſtood, and that not only by us poor hereticks, but by the earlieſt fathers of the church, for whom our purgatory-fire-men profeſs the greateſt reverence, and by whoſe *unanimous conſent* they are engaged to *interpret* the holy oracles. * *Theſe* all agree, that good men, when they died, were preſently in a *ſtate of happineſs*. This was the ſenſe of the primitive church for at leaſt the firſt four centuries, as has been abundantly evidenced by the divines of the Reformation; and we ſtand ready to maintain it, as often as we are call'd to it. I ſhall only give you a paſſage out of St. *Cyprian*, which is greatly to my preſent purpoſe; and I ſingle out that father, becauſe our preſent convert-makers mention him as interpreting the text which ſpeaks of *paying the uttermoſt farthing*, in proof of their purgatory, as I obſerved before.---- " Let us embrace, ſaith he, the day " that aſſigns to every one his habitation, that " delivers us from theſe worldly ſnares, and re- " ſtores us to the heavenly kingdom. Who, " being abroad, would not haſten to return " into his own country? Who, haſtening to " ſail home, would not heartily wiſh for a " good wind, that he might ſpeedily embrace " his friends? We may reckon paradiſe for our " country; we have begun already to have the " patriarchs for our parents; why then do we

* See Creed of *Pius* IV.

" not haſten and run to ſee our country, and " ſalute our parents? A great number of friends " expect us there; a numerous company of pa- " rents, brethren and ſons, deſire us, already " ſecure of their own immortality, but now " ſollicitous about our ſalvation. How great " muſt their and our joy be, in the mutual " ſeeing and embracing each other? What " muſt be the pleaſure of the heavenly king- " doms, where there is no fear of death, but a " certainty of eternal life? There is a glorious " choir of the apoſtles, there is the number of " the exulting prophets, there is the innumer- " able company of martyrs, crowned for the " victory of their fight and paſſion; there are " the triumphing virgins, who, by the ſtrength " of continency, ſubdued the concupiſcence of " the fleſh and body; there are the charitable, " who are rewarded for their works of righ- " teouſneſs, in feeding and giving to the poor; " who, by keeping the precepts of the Lord, " conveyed their earthly patrimony unto the " heavenly treaſury. To theſe, dearly beloved " brethren, let us haſten, and wiſh to be ſpee- " dily with theſe, that ſo we may ſpeedily " come to Chriſt."

Thus this father, who wrote in the third century, comforted the Chriſtians of his age againſt the fear of death, and exhorted them chearfully to receive it. * And if this be conſiſtent with the modern doctrine of purgatory, I am content they ſhall have St. *Cyprian* for their patron.

However,

* See Crit. Hiſt. of the Creed, p. 202.

However, the holy ſcripture (and THAT is the religion of Proteſtants) mentions nothing but reſt and comfort, joy and bleſſedneſs to thoſe, who die in the faith of him, who has *loved them and waſhed them from their ſins in his own blood*, *Rev.* i. 5. They are ſaid to *reſt from their labours*, *Rev.* xiv. 13; which, as archbiſhop *Tillotſon* obſerves, "they cannot be ſaid to do, "who are in a ſtate of great anguiſh and tor-"ment, as thoſe are ſuppoſed to be, who are "in purgatory." Nor is it eaſy to imagine, why they ſhould have ſo much courage as to be willing to be *abſent from the body*, if they are to be no otherwiſe *preſent with the Lord* * that bought them, than is conſiſtent with the horrors and agonies of that middle place of torment.----If it be ſaid, that this *reſt* and *preſence with the Lord*, is peculiar to martyrs, apoſtles, and ſome very good men, I would know what authority they have for that limitation; and I am ſure that muſt be a very plain authority that can be ſet in oppoſition to what has been offer'd upon this argument, by our Reformed writers.----This leads me to the next branch of my diſcourſe, *viz.*

IV. To anſwer what may be *objected* againſt the concluſiveneſs of the argument upon which I have inſiſted, *viz.* That the *Romiſh* tenet of purgatory is oppoſite to the ſcripture doctrine, of being cleanſed from all ſin by the blood of Chriſt, as before repreſented.----All their arguments to prove purgatory are objections againſt my diſcourſe; and ſuch of them as are material

* 2 Cor. v. 8.

rial ſhall be conſider'd. They plead ſcripture, tradition, and reaſon; with what evidence let us ſee.

1. *Scripture* is alledg'd. And here I frankly own, that all the arguments I have offer'd from the doctrine of the plenary ſatisfaction of Chriſt againſt purgatory, muſt be given up, if it has plain ſcripture to ſupport it. Then inſtead of rejecting it we muſt reconcile it as well as we can with thoſe texts that ſeem to make againſt it; and ſhew there is no *real* contradiction between the two articles of faith, and that they only *ſeem* repugnant when they are very well conſiſtent. Thus, we own the puniſhing of ſinners with *everlaſting deſtruction* to be conſiſtent with all we ſay of the love of God, and the grace of Chriſt; becauſe it appears plainly from ſcripture, that the finally impenitent, and unbelieving, can have no relief by the great propitiation which we have been ſpeaking of. Thus we admit alſo, that believers themſelves are to wait the whole time of life, before they can be freed from all the afflictions and temptations which now make them ſo uneaſy; yea, and muſt tarry till the great day before they receive their perfect conſummation and bleſſing; and that notwithſtanding the Redeemer's bearing their ſins, and dying for them, they muſt all die, and their bodies ſee corruption; becauſe ſcripture has aſſured, what experience confirms, that *it is appointed for all men once to die.* And tho' the blood of the Son of God was ſufficient to have ſecured all believers an immediate tranſlation into full conſummate happineſs, both in body

body and ſoul, yet we own that things are otherwiſe ordered by the divine wiſdom, as appears in fact.

In like manner, if it appear'd from plain ſcripture, that believers muſt make ſuch a ſatisfaction as is pretended in purgatory, we muſt be content to adore the riches of God's love, and the grace of Chriſt, that however, they ſhall not finally and for ever periſh, but at laſt have eternal life: I ſay *plain* ſcripture, and not from a few dark texts wreſted to ſerve a turn, and which no man would have ever thought to be to the purpoſe, if he had not firſt taken the doctrine for granted.

And this I verily believe to be the caſe. The church of *Rome* ſaw fit, for ſeveral *valuable conſiderations*, to enact the belief of a purgatory; and then all the wit of her ableſt men was imploy'd to ſearch for ſcriptures that might ſupport it. Were not this the bottom of the buſineſs, could they poſſibly produce ſo many texts that are evidently nothing to the purpoſe. For inſtance, ſome of them ſay, that the flaming ſword, mention'd *Gen.* iii. 24. was a "witneſs "to ſinners, that they muſt paſs thro' purgatory "to paradiſe." To which I hope I need make no anſwer; but ſhall only remark, in the words of *one* of our fathers (who made a vigorous ſtand againſt Popery fifty years ago,) "A fla- "ming ſword ſeem'd a good weapon, and they "were willing to take it into their hands; and "indeed their great argument for all their ar- "ticles has been fire and ſword."*

Bellar-

* Mr. *Weſt*'s ſermon in the *Morning Exerciſes* againſt Popery.

Bellarmine himſelf alledges, *Pſal.* lxvi. 12. *We walked thro' fire and water, and thou broughteſt us into a wealthy place.* To which, ſaith Mr. *Bramſtone* †, we will anſwer him in the words of an applauded Biſhop of their own (*Fiſher* of *Rocheſter.*) " I approve not ſuch trifling as " this, which explains this place of purga- " tory." And indeed all arguments they bring from the Old Teſtament, are arrant triflings. *Bellarmine* in effect owns it, when he confeſſes they are (all *but one*) only probable arguments: which are very unfit to eſtabliſh an article of faith, which muſt be receiv'd upon pain of damnation :---for ſo the Cardinal expreſsly declares, that he muſt burn " for ever in hell that " denies purgatory."

You will be perhaps curious to know what that *ſingle* teſtimony from the Old Teſtament is, which the great champion of the church of *Rome* ſo much confides in.---But perhaps you will be ſurpriſed when I tell you that you can't find it in your Bible, but muſt look for it in the Apocrypha, 2 *Maccab.* xii. 41, &c. However, as this book by the confeſſion of our adverſaries was never receiv'd as canonical by the Jews, to whom were *committed the oracles of God*, I ſhall be excuſed from anſwering the paſſage they refer to. And may juſtly add, that (ſuppoſing it was what the council of *Trent* has declar'd it,) it is no ways clear for the proof of that to which it is apply'd by them. This is affirm'd by our excellent *Primate* (to whom the Proteſtant religion and liberty itſelf owes

† *Anſwer to texts which Papiſts cite for purgatory, p.* 609.

owes ſo much, that while men have any value for either, his name will remembred with honour,) and what he aſſerts he proves ſo fully, that I ſhall only refer to what he has ſaid in his diſcourſe on purgatory, *p.* 14, 15, 16. To which if our modern diſputants have any thing to reply, I aſſure them they ſhall not want an anſwer. I ſhall only add, what has been often obſerved, and particularly by the learned *L. Capellus* *, that " it is aſtoniſhing, that the " doctors of the church of *Rome* ſhould bring " evidence out of the Old Teſtament to prove " purgatory, when they will not affirm that " there was any ſuch thing, or that any when " they died went to it." I add, eſpecially, that they ſhould lay their main ſtreſs upon a book whoſe character is ſo dubious, that one of their own writers tells us, that the doctrine of purgatory is more certain and evident than the authority of that book; and that more evident things are not to be proved by thoſe that are leſs ſo.†

Indeed if they will make out their doctrine of purgatory, we muſt expect it from the New Teſtament; where we may imagine ſuch an important article of faith to be clearly revealed, if there be any thing in it. Here their late author ‡ preſents us with that of St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. iii. 13---15. *Every man's work ſhall be made manifeſt. For the day ſhall declare it, becauſe it ſhall be revealed by fire; and the fire ſhall try every man's work of what ſort it is. If any*

 man's

* De purgatorio, *p.* 45.
† Soto. in Theſ. Leyd. *p.* 506.
‡ Profeſſion, *&c.* p. 35.

man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he ſhall receive a reward. If any man's work ſhall be burnt, he ſhall ſuffer loſs; but he himſelf ſhall be ſaved, yet ſo as by fire. But how often might a man read over this paſſage before he would find purgatory in it; unleſs he came with a ſtrong prepoſſeſſion in favour of that opinion. If we conſider the ſcope of the apoſtle (by which ſurely we are to interpret his writings,) we ſhall find that he is ſpeaking of ſome who held indeed the foundation of Chriſtianity, but built upon it ſuch doctrines and practices as would not bear the trial; which he repreſents as *wood*, *hay* and *ſtubble*, which are not proof againſt the fire. Such a perſon, the apoſtle tells us, hath brought himſelf into a very dangerous ſtate, tho' he would not deny the poſſibility of his ſalvation, as archbiſhop *Tillotſon* obſerves, and adds, that being ſaved ſo as by fire, *or out of* the fire, is a proverbial phraſe uſed not only in ſcripture but in profane authors to ſignify a narrow eſcape out of great danger. Thus *Amos* iv. 11. *Ye were as a fire-brand pluck'd out of the burning*, and *Jude* 23. *Others ſave with fear, plucking them out of the fire.*

But whatever be the ſenſe of this paſſage, is it ſo plain a declaration of their doctrine of purgatory, that the evidence of it cannot be withſtood, and no other probable account can be given of it? Does it appear ſo plainly from this text, that (according to our author) "ſuch "as both in their faith, and in the practice of "their lives have ſtuck to the foundation,

"which

" which is Chriſt Jeſus, ſo as not to forfeit " his grace by mortal ſin, tho' they have been " otherwiſe guilty of great imperfections by " building wood, hay and ſtubble upon this " foundation, (yea though the ſins of which " they have been guilty are but ſmall, which " even God's beſt ſervants are more or leſs liable " to, as he had ſaid juſt before,) that ſuch " muſt paſs through a fiery trial, and that by " it is meant *their purgatory*?"* Is it evidently the deſign of the apoſtle in this paſſage to lay it down as an article of faith, that ſuch perſons as they mention muſt make ſatisfaction in purgatory-fire? Does the ſcope of the apoſtle naturally lead to this, and can he not be underſtood of the damage that the falſe apoſtles and their deluded followers ſhould ſuſtain by corrupting the pure goſpel of Chriſt, and departing from its ſimplicity upon worldly conſiderations? Are the Papiſts ſure that no unprejudiced perſon can underſtand it (as reaſonably at leaſt) of ſuch doctrines and practices which might be built upon the foundations of Chriſtianity to the great hazard and danger of men's ſalvation, and particularly of the doctrine of purgatory? Concerning which the excellent author before mention'd tells us †, " they mean by it an eſtate of temporary " puniſhments after this life, from which men " may be tranſlated into heaven by the prayers " of the living and the ſacrifice of the *Maſs*; " and adds, That this doctrine was not known " in the primitive church, nor can be proved

 " from

* Profeſſion, &c. p. 35. † Serm. 11.

" from ſcripture, we have the free acknowledg-
" ment of as learned and eminent men as any
" of their church; which is to acknowledge,
" that it is a ſuperſtructure upon the Chriſtian
" religion. And tho' indeed in one ſenſe it be
" a building of *gold* and *ſilver* upon the founda-
" tion of Chriſtianity, conſidering the vaſt re-
" venues which this doctrine (and that of *in-*
" *dulgences* which depends upon it) brings into
" the church, yet I doubt not but in the apo-
" ſtle's ſenſe it will be found *hay* and *ſtubble*.
" But how groundleſs ſoever it be, it's too gain-
" ful a doctrine to be parted with." And he has a paſſage in another * ſermon to the ſame purpoſe. " They pretend a mighty bank and
" treaſure of merits in the church, which they
" ſell to the people for ready money, giving
" them bills of exchange from the *Pope* to *pur-*
" *gatory*, when they who grant them have no
" reaſon to think they will avail them or be
" accepted in the other world."

It may be ſaid, this interpretation of St. *Paul*'s words was the ſenſe of a poor blind heretick. But I would fain know how it came to paſs, that ſo many doctors of their own church could not ſee this article of faith in ſo plain a text. How was it that one ſhould ſay,† that " we ought not to lay any ſtreſs in the proof
" of purgatory upon paſſages of ſcripture," particularly mentioning this which I am now conſidering. And that their martyr ‡ *Fiſher* ſhould own, that " he could not readily find any
" one

* Serm. 30.

† Petrus à Soto, in ſacerd. Inſtruct. Lect. 1. de purg.

‡ Contra Lutherum artic. 18.

" one ſcripture, that would force one to confeſs " a purgatory: and if there be any ſuch, ſaith " he, it has hitherto eſcap'd the moſt diligent " enquirers." I ſhould not mention *Peter Cotton* the Jeſuit, if I had not the authority of ſo grave and faithful an hiſtorian as their own *Thuanus*, who among other queſtions, propoſed this to the evil ſpirit in a pretended *Demoniac:* " What place of ſcripture there was by which " purgatory muſt evidently be proved."

But to return: *Bellarmine* tells us that this text is one of the obſcureſt but yet moſt profitable ones [for that purpoſe:] upon which * one obſerves, " So illuſtriouſly manifeſt is their cauſe " in the ſcriptures, that its higheſt advantages " are the deepeſt obſcurities, and its cleareſt " light treaſur'd up in the profoundeſt dark- " neſs."

But what is moſt to be wonder'd at is, that none of the *Greek* fathers could ſee this doctrine ſo evidently propoſed in this text; *Theodoret* and *Theophylact* interpreting the fire here ſpoke of to be the fire of hell, and the day which is to reveal it the day of judgment.---And that the *Greek* church neither at this day does, nor ever did receive this doctrine, how plainly ſoever it is pretended by ſome to be held forth in the ſcripture.---From whence by the way, as was obſerved long ago, " we need no clearer " evidence to ſhew that the whole buſineſs of " purgatory is but an error of the *Latin* church, " and not an article of the *Catholick* faith.†

I have

* Mr. *Bramſtone*'s texts examined, *&c.*

† Archbiſhop's diſcourſe of purgatory, *p.* 43.

I have been the longer upon this text, becauſe it is ſet foremoſt in the liſt of thoſe which our modern author ſaith, the fathers and eccleſiaſtical writers interpret of purgatory; and becauſe the anſwer I have given to this may be applied to all the reſt they alledge, as far as I am directly concern'd. I mean that none of them are plain and clear enough to found an article of faith upon, and ſo put us to difficulty when we affirm that the doctrine of purgatory ſatisfaction ſtands in oppoſition to that of atonement by Chriſt's blood.---And if any of the labourers in the *Roman* harveſt, who at preſent ſwarm among us, tell you otherwiſe, I ſhall only ſay, let them pitch upon one ſingle text which by the unanimous conſent of the fathers is to be taken and interpreted of purgatory in the ſenſe of the preſent church of *Rome*, and they ſhall receive ſatisfaction.

Will they pretend this of the 2d paſſage they produce in evidence for their doctrine of purgatory? *Matt.* v. 25, 26. Is the *priſon* there ſpoken of, out of which men muſt *not come 'till they have paid the uttermoſt farthing*, the priſon of purgatory, according to the unanimous conſent of the fathers? They mention only *Cyprian*, and him very wrongfully, as the archbiſhop of *Canterbury* has proved in the excellent diſcourſe I have referred to; and the long paſſage I repeated to you before out of that father, ſeems very little to agree with the point they would fain have him bear teſtimony to.----And many ſuch paſſages might be eaſily produced to ſhew the opinion of the primitive writers to have been,

that

that the ſouls of the godly immediately, after their ſeparation from the body, paſs into a place of bliſs and happineſs.----They never dream'd of their paying the uttermoſt farthing in purgatory-priſon.----I know, indeed, they repreſented them as in a ſtate of expectation, looking and waiting for the day of judgment; (which *Tertullian* elegantly expreſſes, [*in candidâ expectare diem judicii*] alluding to the candidates or ſuitors for preferments among the *Romans,*) but of purgatory pains in the intermediate ſtate, it does not appear they knew any thing. And when then may we expect a text which they all agree to expound of the *Romiſh* purgatory? Let me only add, what one would think ſhould put our preſent miſſionaries a little out of countenance, when they cite this paſſage out of St. *Matthew* to ſupport their fable, that ſeveral of their own learned men put a quite different interpretation upon it. *

A third text we are preſented with in the forementioned *profeſſion, &c.* is that *Matt.* xii. 32. *It ſhall not be forgiven him neither in this world, neither in the world to come.* "Which "words, ſaith the author, *&c.* plainly imply "that ſome ſins which are not forgiven in this "world, may be forgiven in the world to come." But is this interpretation according to the unanimous conſent of the fathers, or of their own doctors either? The contrary is full well known. I know they can quote St. *Auſtin* for this notion in general, (tho' he never, I believe, dream'd of their purgatory) and that from this text, that there

* Particularly *Maldonate*, a Jeſuit.

there may be ſome future remiſſion of ſins after this life; but what remiſſion, or of what ſins, he declares he dares not aver, and in ſeveral places expreſſes himſelf doubtful about it; and therefore his authority in the interpretation of this paſſage, is very unfit to make it a ground for an article of faith.----Nay, *Bellarmine* himſelf acknowledges, that according to the rules of logic, purgatory cannot be inferr'd from it. And really, a text from whence a doctrine cannot be inferr'd by the rules of logic, is a very indifferent foundation for a canon with an anathema annexed to it.----

However, one would think that St. *Mark* and St. *Luke* were better interpreters of their brother *Matthew*, than all fathers and doctors put together; and their ſenſe is, that thoſe who commit the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, ſhall *never be forgiven.* * But ſuppoſe our Saviour's expreſſion in *Matthew* does intimate a forgiveneſs expected in the world to come, why muſt this relate to purgatory? Why, it cannot be in hell, for there is no forgiveneſs---right---nor in heaven, for there is no ſin---true.---But is there no forgiveneſs to be expected at the place, where *God will judge the world in righteouſneſs, by the man whom he has ordain'd? Acts* xvii. 31. Shall not true believers be openly acknowledged and *acquitted* at the day of judgment? Will not your *ſins be blotted out when the times of refreſhment ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord?* Acts iii. 19. And did not the fathers underſtand this place of the laſt day? tho'

* See Mark iii. 29. Luke xii. 10.

tho' ſome Proteſtants † refer it to the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*. I ſhall only aſk, where all nations ſhall be gather'd before the judge, and from whence they are to go into life eternal, or everlaſting puniſhment? and may ſay, the ſins that have not been forgiven here, ſhall not be forgiven there.

This may be a ſufficient anſwer to their argument from this text; and I might add, that if our Saviour deſigned an intimation of any expectations that men might form of forgiveneſs in another world, he might poſſibly have an eye to a common notion among the *Jews* to whom he ſpake, *viz.* "That not only in the "kingdom of the *Meſſiah*, but in the ſtate af-"ter death, remiſſion might be had for ſome "ſins, which could not otherwiſe be forgiven." But whatever our Saviour might farther mean, if he deſigned to intimate any thing beſide what he plainly declared, that the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt was utterly irremiſſible, ſurely it could not be the purgatory of the *Romaniſts*; for *theſe* men are to ſatisfy, not to be pardoned. "What, ſaith our archbiſhop, * have we "here to do with remiſſion of ſins? Purgato-"ry is a place not where ſins are remitted, "but where they are puniſhed with the grea-"teſt ſeverity. Nay, what is ſtill more, pu-"niſhed after they are remitted; nay, what is "ſtill more extraordinary, therefore puniſhed "becauſe they are remitted; for if the guilt "were not remitted, the ſinner could not go

F to

† *Grotius* and *Hammond*. * Diſc. of Purg. p. 20.

" to purgatory, nor have the favour of being " puniſhed there."

Thus I have conſidered thoſe texts which our adverſaries ſeem to lay moſt ſtreſs upon, and which appear leaſt impertinent to their purpoſe. Nor ſhould I think it worth while to mention any more of *Bellarmine*'s 19 texts; but in compliment to our modern authors, I muſt take notice of the fourth ſcripture he alledges, which the Cardinal, it ſeems, overlook'd, 1 *Pet.* iii. 18, 19, 20. where Chriſt is ſaid, by his ſpirit, to have gone and *preached to the ſpirits in priſon, which ſome time were diſobedient.* * " Which priſon, " ſays he, could be no other than purgatory." But do the fathers and their own doctors unanimouſly agree in this interpretation of the difficult text? Surely they would, if it was plain enough to ground an article of faith. I ſhall only farther aſk, Did theſe diſobedient people die in mortal ſin, or in a ſtate of grace? If the former, they went to hell; if the latter, to *Limbus*, a place where there is no torment: And what then is become of the argument for purgatory from this paſſage? At leaſt is it evident to all unprejudiced perſons, that the apoſtle in this place has reference to that doctrine? Nor is this the only obſcure text they alledge in proof of their doctrine; but reſolving to puzzle the cauſe, they have recourſe to another which has been thought one of the hardeſt to be underſtood in the whole New Teſtament, 1 *Cor.* xv. 29, *Elſe what ſhall they do that are baptiſed for the dead?* It's pity we have not the unanimous

* Profeſſ. &c. p. 36.

mous conſent of the fathers for the interpretation of this text; perhaps then we ſhould know what to make of it, but till ſuch an explication be produc'd, we muſt be excuſed from admitting it as a proof of their new article of faith.---And if we could ſuppoſe it would be taken well, for hereticks to explain a difficult paſſage of ſcripture, which has puzzled ſo many of their own doctors, I would refer them to a very probable account given of this place by a learned gentleman, in a * book publiſhed a few years ago.

Now to conclude this part of the argument: from what has been ſaid, I infer that there is no plain ſcripture proof for purgatory, and conſequently it ought to be rejected as being in direct oppoſition to the ſcripture doctrine of juſtification by faith in the *blood of Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God*, which (rightly apply'd to) perfectly and fully *cleanſeth from all ſin*; and the objection from ſcripture is anſwered.

2. But ſecondly they alledge *tradition*; but till our opponents have anſwered the fifth ſermon in this courſe, upon the head of *ſcripture* and *tradition*, I may be allow'd to take no notice of their objection from thence. However, to what I have hinted before, of purgatory being a novel doctrine, and contrary to the ſenſe of the Catholick church, for at leaſt the firſt four centuries, I ſhall add a paſſage of the learned biſhop *Bull*, in his anſwer to a letter written from Monſieur *de Meaux* to Mr. *Nelſon*, †

* Fortuita ſacra, Rotterodami 1727. p. 137, &c.

† Sect. 3. p. 278.

which I will leave our friends of the church of *Rome* to conſider: " The doctrine, ſaith he, " of indulgences, as taught in the church of " *Rome*, depends upon the fiction of purgato- " ry; it ſuppoſeth a ſuperfluity of the ſatisfa- " ctions of the ſaints, which being jumbled " together with the merits and ſatisfaction of " our Saviour, makes up one treaſure of the " church; that the biſhop of *Rome* keeps the " key of it.----Is not this now, ſaith he, a do- " ctrine worthy of a place in our creed, and to " be made an article of the Catholick faith.--- " He adds, That the doctrine and uſe of in- " dulgences were never heard of in the church " of Chriſt for many hundred years, is certain, " and confeſſed too by divers learned men of " the *Roman* communion. I ſhall cite only one " of them, ſaith the biſhop, but he ſuch a one " as may be *inſtar omnium:* our *Roffenſis* [*Fi- " ſher*, biſhop of *Rocheſter*] *Luther*'s great an- " tagoniſt, and *Rome*'s martyr, gives us this " account of indulgences. Many perhaps are " tempted not to rely much upon indulgences, " upon this conſideration, that the uſe of them " appears to be new, and very lately known " among Chriſtians. To whom I anſwer, it " is not very certain who was the firſt author " of them. The doctrine of purgatory was " rarely, if at all heard of amongſt the an- " cients, and to this very day the *Greeks* be- " lieve it not; nor was the belief either of pur- " gatory or indulgences ſo neceſſary in the " primitive church as it is now. So long as " men were unconcerned about purgatory, no

body

" body enquired after indulgences; for upon " that depends all the worth of indulgences; take " away purgatory, and there is no more need of " theſe. Seeing therefore purgatory was ſo late- " ly known and received in the univerſal " church, who will wonder that in the firſt " ages of the church indulgences were not " made uſe of?" *

3. In the laſt place they urge *reaſon*; and truly if that be on their ſide, the Proteſtants will be hard ſet. But how do they ground their belief of purgatory upon reaſon? " They " anſwer, becauſe reaſon clearly teaches theſe " two things: 1. That all or every ſin, how " ſmall ſoever, deſerves puniſhment. 2. That " ſome ſins are ſo ſmall, either thro' the levity " of the matter, or for want of full delibera- " tion in the action, as not to deſerve eternal " puniſhment. From whence, ſay they, it is " plain, that beſides the place of eternal pu- " niſhment, which we call hell, there muſt be " alſo a place of temporal puniſhment for lit- " tle ſins, which we call purgatory." † And that I may throw all their reaſoning (ſuch as it is) together: " They ſay ſuch as depart this life " before they have repented for thoſe venial " frailties and imperfections cannot be ſuppoſed " to be condemned to the eternal torment of " hell, ſince the ſins they are guilty of are but " ſmall, which even God's beſt ſervants are li- " able to.---Nor can they go ſtrait to heaven " in this ſtate, becauſe the ſcripture aſſures us, " *There ſhall in no wiſe enter thither any thing* " *that*

* Act. 18. contra Lutherum. † Profeſſ. &c. p. 37.

" *that defileth*,----and our Saviour aſſures us,
" that we are to *render an account for every idle*
" *word.* And they farther plead, that *God will*
" *render to every one according to his works.*
" Now, ſay they, this would not be true if there
" were no ſuch thing as purgatory."

But in anſwer to all this,

1. We allow that every ſin deſerves puniſhment, ſeeing it is a tranſgreſſion of the law.

2. We allow that all tranſgreſſions of the law are not equally heinous.

3. We allow particularly that there is a vaſt difference between the common infirmities of good men, and the wilful offences of wicked tranſgreſſors.

4. But that any ſin is in its own nature venial, ſo as not to deſerve eternal puniſhment, if God ſhould proceed in a way of rigorous juſtice, we cannot preſently agree to grant; but muſt expect their proof that ſome acts of diſobedience to God cannot juſtly be puniſh'd with everlaſting deſtruction.

5. Eſpecially they muſt prove this of all venial ſins as ſuch; of which if they pleaſe to look over their catalogues, they will find many much worſe than ſome they call mortal;* particularly than the mortal ſin of denying purgatory and its appendages, and other peculiar doctrines of the church.

6. But to come home to the matter; with what reaſons will they prove, that if the juſtice of God may deliver believers from the pains of eternal

* See *Clarkſon*, ut ſuprà.

eternal death, he may not upon the ſame account remit all temporal penalties, and take them directly into a ſtate of reſt without paſſing thro' the fire of purgatory? Is not juſtice ſatisfied by the ſufferings of the Son of God? and then what need of farther ſatisfaction? Or are they not morally qualified to have the benefit of Chriſt's ſacrifice, by being penitent believers? Is not their repentance an habitual diſpoſition? Do they not exerciſe it daily? Are they not bringing the *ſacrifices of God, a broken and contrite heart*, to *God by Chriſt Jeſus continually?* and if when *no man can underſtand his errors*, they ſhould not have actually repented of an *idle word* (in the ſenſe of this author) or any ordinary failing, is it reaſonable to imagine that departing this life in God's grace, in a ſtate of friendſhip with him, thro' the mediation of his Son, and the ſanctification of the Spirit; is it reaſonable, I ſay, to imagine that they are liable to burn in a temporary hell, and for ought we know, for ſome ages, before they can enter into reſt? and this too not for further moral preparation, but merely to make ſatisfaction? I appeal to every ſerious mind, whether it does not appear at firſt ſight reaſonable, that, if the *blood of Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin*, and *there is no condemnation to them that are in him*, and *who walk not after the fleſh but after the ſpirit*, there needs no other method of purgation or ſatisfaction,---and that if there needs no other, there can be no other; becauſe infinite wiſdom would not appoint that for which there is no occaſion, and infinite goodneſs would be ſure

not

not to preſcribe any thing grievous and diſtreſſing without a real neceſſity for it.

7. But I muſt come a little cloſer to theſe men of reaſon, and ask whether it is not as reaſonable that God ſhould receive ſuch as I have deſcribed immediately into a ſtate of joy and felicity, as that he ſhould take the worſt of ſinners who die immediately after their baptiſm, or who are any way murder'd for their religion, or ſuch as are aſſoil'd from mortal ſins by attrition and the ſacraments, if they have an intereſt in certain merits; I ſay, that God ſhould take ſuch directly into heaven, and make them partakers of the beatifical viſion? If this be reaſon, I muſt own myſelf in a wrong way of thinking.

8. Laſtly, I have one word more to ſay to them, *viz.* I wonder with what face they can pretend to reaſon us out of ſo many plain texts which aſſert our doctrine of forgiveneſs as before ſtated, when in ſpite of ſcripture, tradition, reaſon and common ſenſe, they would obtrude upon us their doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation* upon the authority of their *Hoc eſt Corpus meum*, *This is my body*, which we have evidently proved to be nothing to their purpoſe.* I can't help ſaying, Do theſe men talk of reaſon!

IV. I am to make a few remarks upon the whole.

1. Let us ſee what ground we have not only to *reject* the Romiſh doctrine of purgatory

* See Dr. *Harris*'s Sermon.

tory as having no foundation in ſcripture, (which is enough to ſpoil the credit of any opinion that would ſet up for an article of faith) but to reject it with *abhorrence* as being contrary to ſcripture, and particularly that eſſential article of forgiveneſs of all ſin thro' the blood of Chriſt. It may indeed be juſtly enough ridiculed, but it ought to be deteſted by all thoſe who *honour God and love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity.*

2. Let us obſerve the reaſon we have to bleſs God, that we have the ſcriptures, a perfect rule for our faith and practice: and that we have them in a language we underſtand, and are allowed to judge for ourſelves of what they contain: that we are not obliged to receive any thing as a truth of God, or appointment of Chriſt, but what we find there; and may reject any thing that appears contrary to the word of God, whatever power pretends to impoſe it; and may ſlight their *anathemas*, as a *curſe cauſeleſs* which *ſhall not come.*

And let us be thankful alſo that we live under a government which allows us to keep our Bibles, and take our religion out of them, and make publick profeſſion of it too, without incurring the penalties of an *inquiſition*, or the *wholſome ſeverities* which our fathers felt, and ſome of us remember. Let us bleſs God for the Reformation, and the ſecurity given to it by the Revolution, and the proſpect we have of its continuance under the protection of his moſt gracious Majeſty and his illuſtrious houſe: for whom let us pray, and for *all that are in authority, that under them we may lead a quiet and*

peaceable life in all godlineſs and honeſty. And let us take care that we *ſubmit ourſelves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's ſake, whether it be to the king as ſupreme, or unto governors as unto them that are ſent by him, for the puniſhment of evil-doers, and the praiſe of them that do well,* 1 Pet. ii. 13, *&c.* And ſeeing God has made us free, as *free let us not uſe our liberty for a cloak of maliciouſneſs,* ver. 14. *that with well-doing we may put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men:* that they may be out of countenance when they call us *rebels,* as they ought to be when they call us *hereticks.*

3. From what has been offer'd there is reaſon to encourage *good men* not to be *frighten'd* with an imaginary danger of purgatory-fire. *If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowſhip one with another,* [have communion with the Catholick church] *and the blood of Jeſus Chriſt his ſon cleanſeth from all ſin,* and we need fear no further reckoning. I have ſhew'd the pleas of our adverſaries from ſcripture, tradition, and reaſon, to be vain; do not let them therefore terrify us with their *Ignis fatuus* out of our ſenſes, as they fain would do to perſuade us out of our money, which I am ſatisfied is really the bottom of the buſineſs. The *fire* of purgatory is like the *thunder* of the *Vatican,* a harmleſs thing, which no wiſe man would be afraid of, were it not too often connected with tortures, maſſacres, and aſſaſſinations: otherwiſe it would be regarded as fit only to frighten children, as thoſe ſtories of apparitions are, which *Bellarmine* makes uſe of to confirm his doctrine of purgatory;

purgatory; to which argument I hope you'll excuſe me that I have not return'd a particular anſwer.

4. *Laſtly*, no *wicked man* ſhould *encourage* himſelf by this fiction of purgatory to continue in ſin, and neglect the goſpel ſalvation, which *teacheth to deny ungodlineſs and all worldly luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world.* Do not let men imagine that attrition, with the ſacrament of penance, will ſecure them from hell, and that they may eſcape purgatory too, if they have money to pay for indulgences, *&c.*-----No, my friends, remember that *without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord*, and that even the blood and righteouſneſs of Chriſt itſelf cannot ſave thoſe who will not repent and be converted. Away with all things that pretend to be ſubſtituted in the room of *righteouſneſs and true holineſs*; and remember that though there be no purgatory, there is a *hell*, where *the worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched.* From which God of his infinite mercy ſave us through the blood of his dear Son. *Amen.*

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M DCC XXXV.

ROM. xi. 22.

Behold therefore the goodneſs and ſeverity of God; on them which fell ſeverity, but towards thee goodneſs, if thou continue in his goodneſs, otherwiſe thou alſo ſhalt be cut off.

ST. *Paul* writing to the church of *Rome*, uſefully warns it againſt the danger of ſchiſm; leſt it ſhould be cut off from the unity and communion of the true church. He inforces this warning by conſiderations, equally reaſonable, and perſuaſive. He ſets before them, the then preſent ſtate of the Jewiſh church, God's antient people, who were cut off from the privileges of God's church, by their unbelief. He mentions their

their own happineſs, who from among the Heathen, and idolatrous nations, were received into God's church, and had obtain'd thereby an intereſt in all the bleſſings of God's peculiar people. Theſe were inſtances both of goodneſs and ſeverity, which deſerv'd an attentive obſervation, a careful and wiſe improvement. Did God reject the *Jews*, and caſt off his own people, which had been his *only church*, and ſo highly favour'd by him for ſo long a time? Did God give ſuch an inſtance of ſevere juſtice? Other churches ought wiſely to conſider, why this church was cut off, and how they themſelves ſtand; they ought to obſerve the apoſtle's reaſoning: *Well; becauſe of unbelief they were broken off, and thou ſtandeſt by faith; be not high minded, but fear.** They ought to learn this wiſdom, that they carefully watch againſt a proud conceit of themſelves, and an uncharitable contempt of others, apprehenſive, they may loſe the privileges of the true church, as the *Jews* had done before them, if they ſhall fall into a like ſtate of apoſtacy. If God caſt off his antient people for *their* unbelief, the *Roman* church, to which the apoſtle writes, had juſt reaſon to fear, if it ſhould apoſtatize from the Chriſtian faith, if it ſhould renounce obedience to Chriſt Jeſus

* Ver. 20.

Jeſus the Lord, and to his goſpel, the rule of his religion, *it* alſo ſhould be cut off.

Before I proceed to a particular conſideration of the ſubject I am to diſcourſe upon, it will be proper to make ſome more general remarks on the text itſelf.

Firſt, We may obſerve, the apoſtle repreſents the Jewiſh church *cut off* from the *unity* and *communion* of God's *true church*, while it yet continued *a viſible church in all acts of external communion.* This church, which the apoſtle repreſents, an example of juſtice out off from the privileges of the true church, was yet a church which had many things to glory in. It had an *antiquity* of two thouſand years, *a ſucceſſion of prieſthood* from *Aaron*, to whoſe family the prieſthood was by God's expreſs appointment confin'd. It had been long favoured by God, above all nations of the earth; theirs were *the prophets and the fathers*, and to them were *committed the oracles of God.* They uſed then the ſame external forms of worſhip and communion, which they uſed, when Chriſt himſelf was a member of their church, and in communion with it; and yet the apoſtle calls upon the church of *Rome*, to behold this very church an example

example of God's ſeverity, cut off from the communion and privileges of the true church, by unbelief, becauſe ſhe followed the tradition of her doctors, and their falſe interpretations of the ſcripture; and having falſified the true meaning of the propheſies, rejected the promiſed Meſſiah, when he came, ſhe was cut off, for that unbelief.

2. We are to obſerve, this warning is directed in particular to the *church of* Rome, intimating, *that church* was not free from the danger of ſchiſm, or being cut off from the privileges of the true church, as the Jewiſh church now was. One would think the apoſtle had foreſeen how the church of *Rome* would wreſt the ſcriptures in after-times, to ſupport her pretence to the prerogative of an unerring, infallible, and indefectible church, and had therefore wiſely put in this caution againſt it before-hand. Here the church of *Rome*, in its beſt and pureſt ſtate, is directed to behold the ſeverity of God, towards the Jewiſh church, as a warning to take heed, leſt by a like apoſtacy from the faith and obedience of the true church, ſhe her ſelf ſhould alſo be cut off. Does the apoſtle here ſuppoſe the church of *Rome* could never fail? That it could

could never be in danger of loſing the privileges of the true church? Does the apoſtle ſuppoſe the church of *Rome* muſt neceſſarily be "ever pure, and holy in "her doctrines, and terms of communion? "And therefore always free from any "pernicious errors?" When on the contrary the apoſtle ſuppoſes, that the church of *Rome* has no ſuch prerogative above other churches; that ſhe ought not to depend on any ſuch groundleſs and falſe hopes; that ſhe ſtands in need of this warning as much as any other church: if ſhe ſhall diſregard it, and not continue in the faith, and obedience of the goſpel, ſhe will not continue in the goodneſs of God, and the church of *Rome* itſelf ſhall alſo be cut off.

3. We are here alſo to obſerve, the great danger of ſchiſm, as it cuts off from the communion and privileges of the true church. The apoſtle's ſolemn and awful warning to the church of *Rome*, does evidently mean this. Schiſm, real ſchiſm, which cuts off from the communion of the true church, muſt deprive men of the hopes, privileges and bleſſings, which the true church of God enjoys, in God's peculiar favour and grace, according to his promiſes

and covenant: While we continue in the communion of the true church of God, we continue in the goodneſs of God, in his peculiar favour: but when we are cut off from the communion of the true church, we muſt fall from that ſtate of favour, which God has promiſed to his church, as a people peculiarly conſecrated to his ſervice, and entitled to peculiar marks of his protection and grace.

The ſubject then I am to diſcourſe upon, from theſe words, is of great importance in itſelf; as it nearly concerns all Chriſtians to know when they continue in the goodneſs of God, and when they are cut off from the communion of the true church, and loſe their right to the privileges and bleſſings of it.

It is farther of importance, as it makes a conſiderable part of the controverſy between the church of *Rome* and Proteſtants; a ſubject which the Papiſts have managed with art and ſubtilty; ſo as often to impoſe upon the injudicious, and terrify the weak, and ſometimes to prevail upon perſons of better underſtanding and judgment. The great *Chillingworth* owns,* "He had been ſometimes himſelf abuſed "by this fallacy, and known many other

* L. 5. §. 27.

"poor

" poor ſouls ſeduced, not only from their " own church and religion, but to Popery " by it."

The queſtion then it is my province to conſider is this, Whether the ſeparation of Proteſtants from the external communion of the church of *Rome* be juſt and neceſ-ceſſary; and whether therefore all the guilt of ſchiſm and evil effects of it are not juſtly chargeable on thoſe principles of the *Roman* church, which made the ſeparation of Proteſtants from the *Roman* communion neceſſary for their own reformation.

I ſhall endeavour to give you ſuch a view of this argument, as I hope will be intelligible and convincing, and upon ſuch principles as are generally receiv'd and owned by all Proteſtants.

I. I ſhall briefly ſtate the true nature of ſchiſm, which may alſo ſerve to ſhew the guilt and danger of it.

II. I ſhall ſhew, what reaſon Proteſtants have to charge the principles of the church of *Rome* as ſchiſmatical.

III. I ſhall ſhew the weakneſs and fallacy of thoſe arguments, by which the church of *Rome* attempts to vindicate her ſelf from this charge of ſchiſm, and to charge the Proteſtant reformation with it.

I. I am briefly to ſhew the true nature of ſchiſm, which may alſo ſerve to ſhew the guilt and danger of it.

Schiſm in general means ſome contention, diviſion, or diſunion in bodies which ought to be united. Schiſm in religious matters is pretty much the ſame as ſedition and rebellion are in civil matters; ſo that ſchiſm, ſays a memorable author,* "is "an eccleſiaſtical ſedition, as ſedition is a "lay ſchiſm."

The Chriſtian church is properly repreſented as *one body*, or a ſociety, incorporate by the charter of the goſpel, under Jeſus Chriſt as ſupreme head and governor: And as all true Chriſtians are made members of this one body, they muſt alſo be members one of another. The unity of the Chriſtian church will then come under a

* *Hales*'s Tracts 194.

double

double notion: the unity of this religious ſociety with Chriſt as the head of it; and the unity of the ſeveral members of it with each other, as members of the ſame incorporate ſociety.

1. Then, one principal unity of the Chriſtian church, is the union of all Chriſtians with Chriſt as ſupreme head and governor. All Chriſtians become one body, by *one ſpirit*, as they receive *one Lord*, profeſs *one faith*, are conſecrated by *one baptiſm*, to the ſervice and worſhip of the *one God* and father of all, as they are called in *one hope* of their calling.* When then we ſincerely believe in Chriſt Jeſus the Lord and receive him as God's Anointed, whom he has ſanctified to ſave us from our ſins, and whom he has inveſted with ſupreme power and authority, as head over all things to the church; when we profeſs this faith in ſincerity, when we aim with an upright heart, to make good this profeſſion in all things by obedience to the directions, orders, and rules of Chriſt's goſpel; we then *believe with the heart unto righteouſneſs, and make confeſſion with the mouth unto ſalvation.*†

* Epheſ. iv, 4, &c. † Rom. x. 10.

Then

Then we are, according to the goſpel of Chriſt, which is the charter of his church, received into it, and have a right by it, to all the privileges, bleſſings, and grace promis'd to God's peculiar and favour'd people. This is the unity and communion of the *true Catholick* church, which is not improperly call'd the internal communion of the inviſible church.

But if we continue not in this faith, and obedience of the goſpel of Chriſt; if we refuſe *to walk in Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, as we have received him*; * if we virtually renounce our allegiance to him, as our ſupreme head and governor; we thereby ſeparate ourſelves from *this unity* of his body, and are ſeparated from this internal communion of the inviſible church: We continue not in the goodneſs of God, and in his favour, but forfeit all right to the bleſſings which the charter of Chriſt's goſpel has made the peculiar privileges of his church. This is a behaviour truly ſchiſmatical, and ſo contrary to all the obligations and duty of a Chriſtian, expreſſes ſo high diſobedience to Chriſt and his goſpel, that it muſt be eſteem'd a ſin of moſt dangerous conſequence.

2. We

* Coloſſ. v. 6.

2. We are further to obſerve, there is another unity of the Chriſtian church, whereby the members of it are united to each other. Love and charity are eſſential precepts of true religion; Chriſt has made the love of Chriſtians to each other the diſtinguiſhing character of his diſciples; this is that *bond of perfectneſs*, by which the ſeveral members of the Chriſtian church are moſt perfectly united to each other.

An *unity of opinion* in all points, *an uniform practice* in all things, an *union of government* under one univerſal head of the church, as vicar of Chriſt upon earth, cannot be neceſſary to the union of all Chriſtians among themſelves. The wiſdom of God never made that *neceſſary*, which the nature of things, and conſtant experience of the world, ſhew to be *impracticable*. That all Chriſtians then ſhould agree in points uncertain and doubtful, or be united in ſubmiſſion to an authority without all reaſon, and againſt many evident and important reaſons, can never be the bond of Catholick communion, can never be that *perfect bond of unity* which is able to unite *all true Chriſtians* among themſelves.

But

But *all Chriſtians* may be united in affection and brotherly love: theſe are duties certainly required of every Chriſtian; theſe are proper means by which the peace, the honour, the perfection of the Chriſtian church, as a religious ſociety, will be greatly promoted. It muſt be then a very great Chriſtian duty, an important part of obedience to the Chriſtian faith, to keep this *unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace.* All therefore, who from pride and ambition, from covetouſneſs and private intereſt, from envy or revenge, from angry paſſion or unſociable temper, ſhall be the uncharitable cauſe of contentions and diviſions in the Chriſtian church, and bring upon it all the diſorder and evils that ſeldom fail to follow ſuch uncharitable diviſions, muſt be guilty of a very grievous ſin: a ſin ſo dangerous to the peace, honour, and perfection of the church, we may well fear threatens a loſs of the privileges of the true church. There is great reaſon to fear that Chriſt, the true head of the church, will treat them as *aliens and ſtrangers to the covenant of promiſe*, who will not *walk in love as fellow-citizens with the ſaints.* Uncharitable contentions and diviſions ſeem to have run their full length. When Chriſtians ſhall refuſe to join with each other

in

in worſhipping the one God and Father of them all, or in the ſervice of the one Lord, their common Saviour and head; when *they* ſhall excommunicate and anathematize each other; when Chriſtians ſhall come to ſo high a degree of uncharitableneſs as to *hate* their fellow Chriſtians more heartily than they *love* their God and Saviour, than they regard the peace, the honour, or the happineſs of their church; then ſure they are juſtly chargeable with the guilt of ſchiſm. They have reaſon to fear all the evils that follow upon it, the righteous puniſhment of ſo great, ſo grievous a ſin. I proceed,

II. To ſhew *what* reaſons Proteſtants have to charge the principles of Popery as ſchiſmatical, ſo that the great danger of ſchiſm will be found in the communion of the *Roman* church, and not in the communion of the Reformed churches. It is a plain and ſure truth, * " The ſchiſm is " theirs, whoſe the cauſe of it is; and he " makes the ſeparation, that gave the firſt " juſt cauſe of it; not he that makes an " actual ſeparation, upon a juſt cauſe firſt " given." Or, † " a culpable breach of

* Archbiſhop *Laud* againſt *Fiſher*, S. 21. N. 6. p. 92.
† *Dodwell* on Schiſm, p. 568.

" the church's unity is, what is proper-
" ly meant by the true nature of ſchiſm."

The queſtion then, whether the principles of Popery are ſchiſmatical may be brought to this plain iſſue: Whether the church of *Rome* impoſing the profeſſion and practice of great errors and corruptions on perſons, who could not profeſs and practiſe them without danger of cutting themſelves off from the communion of the true church with Chriſt the head, and without damnable ſin, and yet uncharitably excommunicating and cutting off from her communion all who refuſe to comply with her corruptions, is not the real cauſe of a very grievous ſchiſm in the church of Chriſt? To make good this charge I would obſerve,

1. The church of *Rome* requires the profeſſion and practice of great errors, and dangerous corruptions. It is not my province to conſider theſe errors and corruptions in particular; ſeveral able hands have conſidered them already, and proved them on the church of *Rome* with full evidence, and I hope to your full ſatisfaction. It will be ſufficient for our preſent purpoſe to obſerve, that the Popiſh doctrine of infallibility has taken away the very foundation of

of *Chriſtian faith*, together with all authority of the word of God, which only can be the foundation of a *divine* faith; and really leaves no foundation for the faith of the Chriſtian church, but the authority of fallible men. The church of *Rome*, by taking away the uſe of the ſcriptures from the common people, hath taken away the key of knowledge; and by directing the uſe of an unknown tongue in their prayers, will not permit men to worſhip God with underſtanding. By the doctrines of abſolution and purgatory, the *Roman* church teaches men a way, how they may hope for the ſalvation of God at the laſt, though they live in ſin, nay even though they die in their ſins. The doctrines of this church aſcribe ſuch power and authority to the Pope, as leave no power, no authority to Chriſt himſelf: in virtue of this uſurped authority, the church of *Rome* adds her own conſtitutions to the inſtitutions of Chriſt, and makes them of as binding obligation as his; aſſumes a power to ſet aſide and over-rule them, and even to make decrees in direct contradiction to Chriſt's own expreſs conſtitutions. They have thus taken away one half of the ſacrament of the Lord's Supper, with an expreſs *notwithſtanding* to the allowed inſti-

tution of the cup; they have chang'd the other half from one of the plaineſt rites in the world, into a doctrine full of all manner of abſurdity and contradiction; as if they thought themſelves at full liberty to deprive men of reaſon and of common ſenſe, as well as of faith. Beſides the infinite ſuperſtitions they have introduced in room of the moſt reaſonable ſervice, they have brought their whole worſhip, on many accounts, into great danger of plain idolatry, in the worſhip of angels and ſaints, of bread, and the relicks of dead men, and even of images, againſt which there is ſo full and expreſs a prohibition in the law of God.

2. It is further to be obſerv'd, the *Roman* church has made all theſe errors and corruptions *neceſſary terms of her communion.* She has bound them on the faith and practice of every one of her members, by her full authority, and by the ſolemn deciſions of her general councils. Theſe errors and corruptions are incorporated into the moſt ſolemn acts of worſhip, and the members of the *Roman* church are obliged to *approve* them as well as to *uſe* them. There is a remarkable decree of the council of *Trent* to this purpoſe, with reſpect to all the corruptions

ruptions of their pretended ſeven ſacraments: " If any one ſhall ſay that Chriſt " did not inſtitute all the ſacraments of the " new law, or that they are more or leſs " than ſeven, or that any one of the ſe- " ven is not truly and properly a ſacra- " ment, let him be anathema." * So they require " a full approbation of all the re- " ceiv'd and approved rites the church is " accuſtomed to uſe in the ſolemn admi- " niſtration of them."† Thus the *Roman* church has taken effectual care, that every one muſt have communion with her in her errors and corruptions, or have no communion with her at all. Pope *Boniface* VIII. expreſsly declared, accordingly, " that

* Si quis dixerit ſacramenta novæ legis non fuiſſe omnia à Jeſu Chriſto domino noſtro inſtituta, aut eſſe plura vel pauciora quam ſeptem, videlicet, Baptiſmum, Confirmationem, Euchariſtiam, Penitentiam, Extremam Unctionem, Ordinem, & Matrimonium, aut etiam aliquod horum ſeptem non eſſe verè & propriè ſacramentum, anathema ſit. *Concil. Trident. S.* 7. 3 *Martii*, 1547. *Can.* 1.

† Si quis dixerit receptos & approbatos & eccleſiæ Catholicæ ritus in ſolemni ſacramentorum adminiſtratione adhiberi conſuetos, aut contemni, aut ſine peccato à miniſtris pro libito omitti, aut in novos alios per quemcunque eccleſiarum paſtorem mutari poſſe, anathema ſit. *Ib. Can.* 13.

" obedience

" obedience to the biſhop of *Rome* was " abſolutely neceſſary to ſalvation." ‡

3. It is yet further to be obſerved, the *Roman* church impoſes theſe corruptions with a moſt *uncharitable rigor:* ſhe excommunicates and anathematizes, and perſecutes to ruin and deſtruction with a mercileſs cruelty, all who refuſe a full and intire ſubmiſſion to them. The creed of Pope *Pius* IV, now in uſe for receiving of converts into the *Roman* church, requires, after a profeſſion of the ſeveral doctrines *that* church teaches in particular, this further general profeſſion: " I likewiſe undoubtedly receive and profeſs all " other things delivered, defined, and declared by the ſacred canons and general " councils, and particularly by the holy " council of *Trent*; and I condemn, reject, and anathematize all things contrary thereto, and all hereſies which the " church has condemned, rejected, and " anathematized. I do, at this preſent, " freely profeſs, and ſincerely hold this

‡ Porro ſubeſſe Romano pontifici, omni humanæ creaturæ (*or* omnem humanam creaturam, *as others read it*) declaramus, dicimus, definimus, & pronunciamus, omnino eſſe de neceſſitate ſalutis. *Bonifacius oct. Extravag. Com.* Tit. viii. c. 1. *de majoritate & obedientia.*

" true

" true Catholick faith, without which no " one can be ſaved."

So uncharitable are the principles of Popery; they paſs a ſentence of excommunication and damnation againſt all who will not ſubmit to their dangerous corruptions; and the *Roman* church requires all the members of her communion, to receive thoſe uncharitable principles as a *part of their religion*, and to join with them in their curſes and anathema's, as well as in their errors.

4. The *Roman* church moſt uncharitably impoſes the profeſſion and practice of their errors and corruptions on perſons, who cannot profeſs and practice them, without manifeſt danger of cutting themſelves off from the communion of the true church with Chriſt the head, and *without damnable ſin*. Had their errors and corruptions been of much leſs evil and dangerous conſequence than they really are; yet perſons who knew them to be errors, who were fully convinced in conſcience they were corruptions, could not profeſs to believe them, could not practiſe them without plain hypocriſy and evident falſhood, which are inconſiſtent with the faith and obedience of the goſpel of Chriſt, and are in themſelves damnable

damnable ſins. For, as one well obſerves,* " God, the eternal truth, neither can nor " will oblige us to believe any the leaſt or " moſt innocent falſhood, to be a divine " truth, that is, to err; nor to profeſs a " known error which is, to lie: ſo that if " you require the belief of *any* error among " the *conditions* of your communion, our " *obligation* to communicate with you ceaſ- " eth, and ſo the imputation of ſchiſm to " us vaniſheth into nothing, but lies heavy " upon *you* for making our ſeparation from " you juſt and neceſſary, by requiring *un-* " *neceſſary* and *unlawful* conditions of your " communion." Not therefore to forſake the errors of the *Roman* church, believing them to be errors, or " not to forſake the " practice and profeſſion of them, ſays " the ſame great author, had been dam- " nable hypocriſy, ſuppoſing (which you " vainly run away with and take for gran- " ted,) that thoſe errors in themſelves were " not damnable."†

This plain reaſon made it neceſſary for all perſons, who were ſenſible of the errors and corruptions of Popery, to ſeparate from the external communion of the *Roman* church, becauſe they could not poſſibly con-

* *Chillingworth*'s anſwer to the preface, §. 22,

† Id. Ibid.

tinue

tinue in it without falſhood and diſhoneſty, lying and hypocriſy, which to be ſure are *damnable ſins* in themſelves. But a proof ſo plain and deciſive as this muſt not paſs without ſome diſtinction or exception, that may ſome way darken or perplex it. It is therefore ſaid, though poſſibly this plea may juſtify a *negative* ſeparation or non-communion with the church of *Rome*, in things which we cannot profeſs and practiſe without hypocriſy, yet it will not juſtify a *poſitive* ſeparation, or joining with other ſeparate communions, and ſetting up altar againſt altar. A little attention may ſerve I think to ſhew the inſufficiency and weakneſs of this exception.

For firſt, this exception ſeems to allow, what the principles of the *Roman* communion will not really allow upon any terms. Popery condemns negative ſeparation, or non-communion upon every pretence, as much as poſitive ſeparation, or joining with ſeparate communions; for as the great *Chillingworth* obſerves, " the condi-
" tion of your communion is, that we
" muſt profeſs to believe all your doctrines,
" not only *not to be damnable errors*,
" (which will not content you) but alſo
" to be *certain* and *neceſſary* and *revealed*
" *truths*:---to pretend that there are errors
" in your church, tho' not damnable, is *ipſo*

" *facto* to forſake your communion, and " to do that which both in your account, " and as you think in God's account, puts " him that does ſo out of your commu- " nion :"* ſo that this proof remains firm againſt the *real principles* of the church of *Rome*, any thing in this exception to the contrary notwithſtanding.

Beſides, the worſhip of God is a firſt and principal duty of the law of nature and of all religion : to worſhip God according to the directions of the Chriſtian revelation, is a chief duty of Chriſtianity. Is it poſſible then a doctrine ſo uncertain and doubtful, ſo erroneous and falſe, as the Pope's ſupreme authority over the whole Chriſtian church, ſhould null and make void the chief and moſt ſacred obligations of the Chriſtian revelation, and the eternal laws of natural religion ? Is it poſſible any authority can proceed from *God*, and *Chriſt*, which ſhall lay an obligation on *Chriſtians*, not to worſhip God according to the Chriſtian revelation, in any other way than ſuch, in which they cannot worſhip God without damnable ſin : this is in effect to lay an obligation on Chriſtians not to worſhip God at all.

Finally, this exception, inſtead of mending the matter, really makes it worſe. If this doctrine could be true, that Chriſtians

* *Chillingworth*'s anſwer to the preface, §. 81.

were

were not to join in any ſeparate communion from the church of *Rome* to worſhip God, tho' they cannot have communion with the church of *Rome*, without damnable ſin; this would put them under a neceſſity of ſinning either way; *either* by worſhipping God in the church of *Rome*, *or* by not worſhipping God as Chriſtians at all. This ſhews the principles of the church of *Rome* moſt highly ſchiſmatical and uncharitable.

They lay men of conſcience and honeſty, if they are to follow this doctrine, under an hard neceſſity of ſinning which way ſoever they act. They neither permit men of conſcience to have communion with their church, nor ſuffer them to have communion with any other part of the Chriſtian church throughout the whole world: this appears in the higheſt ſenſe a culpable breach of the church's unity, which is the true notion of ſchiſm.

If then the *guilt* of ſchiſm is chargeable upon thoſe who are the *cauſe* of it; Papiſts have taken great care to make the deciſion of this queſtion between us and them evident and plain, by the numerous and important errors and corruptions of their communion, by the obſtinate, rigorous and uncharitable ſpirit with which they impoſe them.

5. We are farther to obſerve, there is one great error of Popery, a principal founda-

tion of its other corruptions, which is directly ſchiſmatical in the moſt dangerous ſenſe, as it breaks the unity and communion of the church with Chriſt the true head of it. Many particular corruptions of the *Roman* church are very important, ſuch as greatly affect the faith, the worſhip, and the practice of Chriſtianity and true religion in many of the chief and more neceſſary points. But this great error I am ſpeaking of, this fundamental corruption, as I may call it, of the *Roman* church, is virtually *denying Chriſt Jeſus the head, and renouncing allegiance to him:* that power and authority which the Pope claims as Chriſt's pretended vicar is ſubverſive of all Chriſt's own authority, as lawgiver and head of his church. For the Pope claims and exerciſes a power to make what new laws he pleaſes, to give an authoritative interpretation of all ſcripture, and ſo deciſively fix the meaning of every law of Chriſt, and thereby to make it mean whatſoever he will, and on occaſion to alter and change the laws of Chriſt as he ſhall ſee fit, even with a * *non obſtante*

* Licet Chriſtus poſt cœnam inſtituerit & ſuis diſcipulis adminiſtraverit, ſub utraque ſpecie panis & vini hoc venerabile ſacramentum, tamen *hoc non obſtante* ſacrorum canonum authoritas & approbata conſuetudo eccleſiæ ſervavit & ſervat, quod hujuſmodi ſacramentum non conficiatur poſt cœnam, nec ſumatur à non jejunis----quod à conficientibus ſub utraque ſpecie, & à laicis tantummodo ſub ſpecie panis ſuſcipiatur.---Item præcipimus ſub pœna excommunicationis, quod nullus presbyter communicet populum ſub utraque ſpecie panis & vini. *Concil. Conſtant.* §. 12.

obſtante to Chriſt's own allow'd inſtitutions. This is a claim of power to ſet aſide the *one Lord*, as well as to change the *one faith* of the Chriſtian church. In Chriſt's kingdom it is an *overt-act of rebellion*, it is not only *contriving* and *attempting* to *depoſe* Chriſt Jeſus from his ſovereign authority; but as far as this power of Popery can reach, it does *actually depoſe* him and *renounce allegiance* to him. Is there not all reaſon to fear, that they who withdraw themſelves from the *allegiance* due to their only ſovereign Lord, do thereby put themſelves out of *his protection*, and cut themſelves off from all the privileges and bleſſings which belong to faithful ſubjects. What then can the external communion of any church avail men, when by not *holding the one head, Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, they have ſeparated themſelves from the internal communion of the church with him, through whom all the goodneſs and the grace of God are communicated to it. Let then ſchiſm be as grievous a ſin as words can repreſent, and of as dangerous conſequence as Papiſts teach, when they would frighten Proteſtants with the apprehenſions of it; let it be * "an offence "ſo grievous, that nothing does ſo much "incenſe God----that no reformation can "be ſo important as the ſin of ſchiſm is "perni-

* *Knott* in *Chillingworth*, c. 5. §. 7. and 56.

" pernicious.----that no multitude of good " works, no moral honeſty of life, no cruel " death, endured even for the profeſſion of " ſome article of faith, can excuſe any " one who is guilty of that ſin from dam- " nation." Yet all this guilt and danger is only chargeable, where the profeſſion and practice of known errors and corruptions, that is, where falſhood and hypocriſy, damnable ſins, are impoſed as neceſſary terms of Chriſtian communion ; not where this gives a juſt and neceſſary cauſe of ſeparation.

The greateſt danger of all in ſchiſm, is to be cut off from the unity of the catholick church, by not *holding the head*, in departing from the faith and obedience of the goſpel. It is very far from certain, that to ſeparate from the external communion of the *Roman* church is to ſeparate from Chriſt's vicar : it is more certain that Chriſt has no vicar upon earth, at leaſt, that no *vicar of Chriſt* can have *thoſe powers*, which the Popes claim and exerciſe : but this is ſtill more certain, that to communicate with the church of *Rome*, in her corruptions, knowing them to be ſo, is to ſeparate our ſelves from *Chriſt himſelf*, the real head of the church, by departing from the faith and obedience of his goſpel.

I proceed in the

III^d. Place to ſhew the weakneſs and fallacy of thoſe arguments by which the church

church of *Rome* endeavours to vindicate herſelf from the charge of ſchiſm, and to prove the guilt of ſchiſm on the Proteſtant Reformation.

* " Jeſus Chriſt, they tell us, has al-
" ways a true church upon earth---which
" true church of Chriſt is one---always
" holy in her doctrines and terms of com-
" munion, and always free from perni-
" cious errors---that Catholicks, and not
" Proteſtants, are this true church of Chriſt.
" For the true church of Chriſt, they ſay,
" can be no other than the Catholick,
" which alone has always had a viſible
" being in the world ever ſince Chriſt's
" time; not the Proteſtant, or any other
" modern ſect, which only came into the
" world ſince the year 1500; for thoſe
" that came into the world fifteen hundred
" years after Chriſt, came into the world
" fifteen hundred years too late to be the
" religion or church of Chriſt." Thus they repreſent their cauſe in the *Grounds of Catholick doctrine*, lately publiſh'd for the uſe of converts. It may not be amiſs here to make one general obſervation, that our charge of ſchiſmatical principles on the *Roman* church, has a plain and eaſy proof founded on evident facts, which the *Roman* church itſelf has taken care to confirm by her own ſolemn decrees and anathemas in

* Grounds of Catholick Doctrine, c. 1.

in the council of *Trent*; and the *Roman* church ſeems to admit, if we can prove ſuch impoſition of error and corruption as we charge the church of *Rome* with, it will juſtify the charge of *ſchiſm*; becauſe they place their defence in denying *all* error and corruption in their doctrine and terms of communion. Whereas the vindication of the church of *Rome*, and her charge of ſchiſm on the Proteſtant Reformation, are built upon groundleſs ſuppoſitions, falſe aſſertions, and fallacious interpretations of ſcripture, in order to prove, what indeed no argument can prove, that the *Roman* church has not erred; that in virtue of the promiſes both of the Old and New Teſtament, ſhe was to continue pure and holy in her doctrine and terms of communion in all ages, even to the end of the world, and conſequently could never ſtand in need of a Proteſtant Reformation. For we ſee the *Roman* church has erred, we ſee ſhe continues to err, we ſee ſhe remains obſtinate and uncharitable in her errors; and even her vain pretence, to be always unerring, cuts off all hope of her reformation.

Now any proof which concludes againſt plain notorious fact, muſt be fallacious *ſomewhere*, though we ſhould not be able to ſhew preciſely *where* the fallacy lay: for we are ſure of this, that no arguments whatever

whatever can prove what is impoſſible to be true, as that a fact ſhould be, and yet not be at the ſame time.

However, the church of *Rome* inſiſts upon it, * " That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, " who cannot tell us a lie, has promiſed " that his church ſhould *be built upon a* " *rock* ; that *the gates of hell*, that is, the " powers of darkneſs, ſhould never *prevail* " *againſt it* : † That Chriſt, who is the " *way*, *the truth*, *and the life*, has promiſed to " the paſtors and teachers of his church, " *to be with them always*, *even to the end* " *of the world* : ‡ That Chriſt has pro- " miſed to the ſame teachers to give them " *the ſpirit of truth*, that he may *abide* " *with them for ever* ; || and that he *ſhall* " *guide them into all truth* : †† And, in " fine, that the church is called by St. " *Paul*, *the pillar and ground of truth* ;** " therefore ſhe cannot uphold pernicious " errors." From theſe, and ſome other paſſages of ſcripture of like ſound, Papiſts infer, " It is manifeſt that the church of " Chriſt (meaning their own communion) " is infallible in all matters relating to " faith, ſo that ſhe can neither add, nor " retrench from what Chriſt taught." It

* Grounds of Catholick Doctrine, ib.
† Matt. xvi. 18. ‡ Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.
|| John xiv. 16, 17. †† John xvi. 13.
** 1 Tim. iii. 15.

is further aſſerted, with a confidence truly amazing; " the Proteſtant religion cannot " be true, except the whole ſcripture both " of the Old and New Teſtament, from " the beginning to the end, be falſe, which " in ſo many places aſſures us, that the " church of Chriſt ſhould never go aſtray--- " and it is evident there could be no room " for a Reformation of the church of " Chriſt, except the church was gone " aſtray." *

Theſe ſeveral paſſages of ſcripture have been often conſidered at large, and their true meaning vindicated from the fallacious interpretations of the Popiſh Doctors: my time will only allow ſome general remarks upon them, which will, however, ſufficiently ſhew, how much they are *miſtaken* and really *miſinterpreted* by a pretended *infallible* interpreter of ſcripture. For in the

1ſt. Place, it is far from manifeſt, that theſe ſcriptures, whatever their true meaning may be, give any particular promiſe or privilege to that part of the church, which communicates with the Pope or biſhop of *Rome.* They may full as well mean, thoſe faithful Chriſtians who in all ages withſtood the errors and corruptions of Popery; for theſe faithful witneſſes were a *part*

* Roman Catholick's Reaſons why he cannot conform to the Proteſtant Religion, p. 2.

a *part* of the church of Chriſt, a *much better part* of it than the *Roman* communion: They were more likely to have their faith and patience ſupported with encouragements of divine aſſiſtance in times of dangerous apoſtacy, and violent oppoſition to the cauſe of truth and Chriſtian liberty. It is certain the Papiſts themſelves will not have theſe ſcriptures to mean every part of the Chriſtian church, or indeed any part of it, which is not in communion with them: the ſcriptures no where ſhew they intend theſe privileges, whatever they may be, for the *Roman* communion, more than for the *Greek*. The ſcriptures no where intimate the biſhop of *Rome* has a greater intereſt in theſe promiſes than the biſhops of *Conſtantinople*, *Alexandria*, *Antioch*, or *Jeruſalem*. Indeed the church of *Rome* has ſhewn manifeſtly by her corruptions, ſhe has as little pretence to ſuch privileges, as any known part of the Chriſtian church throughout the whole world.

2*dly*, We further obſerve, it is far from manifeſt, that theſe ſcriptures promiſe *unerring perfection* to *any part* of the church at all. What promiſe is contained in theſe ſcriptures, that any church ſhall be infallible in all matters relating to faith, ſo that it can neither add, nor retrench from what Chriſt has taught? It is ſo far from being

manifeſt, that this is the true meaning of theſe ſcriptures, that plain, conſtant, and evident experience manifeſtly ſhews, it is not, and cannot be the true meaning of them. Indeed the full meaning of them is anſwered in theſe two things:

1. In ſuch revelation of God's will, by the Spirit of truth, as ſhall always direct the church into the knowledge of all truth neceſſary to ſalvation: this is always done by the holy ſcriptures, the oracles of truth, in which every Chriſtian has the ſpirit of truth which inſpired the apoſtles, guiding them into all truth of the Chriſtian revelation; except however the *Roman* church, which ſeems reſolved theſe promiſes ſhall not, in this ſenſe at leaſt, belong to her, by denying the uſe of the ſcriptures to thoſe who are in her communion.

2. The fulleſt meaning of theſe ſcriptures is anſwered, by a continual protection of God's providence and gracious aſſiſtance of his holy Spirit, which ſhall preſerve his church in this world, ſo that the profeſſion of the Chriſtian faith ſhall be maintain'd in every age; that notwithſtanding all oppoſition of error or wickedneſs, ſome ſhall be found faithful, ſome ſhall hold and profeſs the chief and eſſential truths of the Chriſtian faith, which ſhall be ſufficient to

ſhew

ſhew the true way of ſalvation, as made known in the Chriſtian revelation. But does this promiſe any ways teach us, that they who hold all neceſſary truth cannot poſſibly fall into any error? Does this prove, for inſtance, that the church of *Rome* cannot poſſibly add ſome of her own *inventions* to the doctrines of God's *revelation?* that ſhe can never teach for doctrines the commandments of *men*, as well as the commandments of *God?* or even when ſhe holds the *truth*, that ſhe may not hold it in *unrighteouſneſs?* or, in a word, do theſe ſcriptures prove, that the church of *Rome* cannot poſſibly do what moſt certainly ſhe has done?

Thus all theſe ſcriptures are a groundleſs and a falſe foundation for the Popiſh claim of unerring perfection; for they promiſe no particular privilege to the *Roman* church above other churches, nor do they promiſe unerring perfection to any church at all. Still the Popiſh doctors have further pleas in reſerve, to make theſe ſcriptures mean what they would have them, whatever their true meaning may be, by contending, * "We are to take the meaning and interpretation of ſcripture from "the ſame hand from which we received "the book itſelf, that is, from the church, "and not aſſume a liberty to interpret "ſcripture

* Grounds of Catholick Doctrine, C. 2. §. 1.

" ſcripture according to our own private " judgment."

I ſhall not attempt to ſhew how groundleſs and falſe this pretence is; this has been already fully proved to you. I ſhall only obſerve one thing, in anſwer to their harangue, againſt the liberty Proteſtants take to interpret the ſcriptures according to their own *private* judgment.

Proteſtants modeſtly own the *fallibility* of their *own* judgment; but they juſtly lay claim to *ſufficient certainty* in the *true ſenſe* and *meaning* of the holy ſcriptures in all things *neceſſary*. Proteſtants, though they own they are fallible in many things, and ſhould therefore ſhew a modeſty in their opinions becoming ſuch an acknowledgment; yet they juſtly aſſert, there are many things, in which they are *ſufficiently certain*, that they are *not miſtaken*. They are ſufficiently certain that the *Roman* church has erred, that ſhe is no infallible judge of controverſies, when ſhe has pronounced ſo many errors to be doctrines of faith. This is not a pretence to *infallibility*. This is not to oppoſe the *authority* of private judgment to the publick *authority* of the church. It is only to oppoſe the *certainty of divine revelation*, to the *known corrupt practices* of the *Roman* communion, in things wherein the practice of the church of *Rome* plainly and evidently

oppoſes

oppoſes the laws and orders of the Chriſtian revelation; this is only to oppoſe the *commandments of God* to the *doctrines of men*, and the *real authority* of Chriſt the one Lord, to the *uſurped authority* of his pretended vicar: and every one muſt have authority from God himſelf to do what God himſelf requires of him as his duty, *to prove all things, and to hold faſt that which is good.**

After all that can be ſaid on this argument, it will remain a ſure and evident truth, that every man's *own judgment*, upon an honeſt and careful inquiry how he is to walk and pleaſe God, is *his conſcience*; in following which he will always walk before God with an upright heart, and ſerve him with godly ſincerity; and ſo far muſt do that which is good and right in the ſight of God: but for a man to act contrary to *his conſcience*, is not to ſerve God with an upright heart; it is to walk before him in falſhood and hypocriſy, and therefore to do that which certainly is evil in his ſight; for *lying lips are always an abomination unto the Lord.*

It is therefore highly unreaſonable and extravagant to demand, as the *Roman* church does, that Proteſtants ought to *rectify* their conſciences and *ſubmit* them to the *authority* of their church; and rather believe the church of *Rome* cannot err, becauſe *ſhe* ſays ſo;

* 1 Theſſ. v. 21.

ſo; than that ſhe has erred, tho' *they* ſee her errors with their own eyes. This is not to *rectify* conſcience, but to *deſtroy* it. It requires men to act againſt all rules of reaſon, honeſty and religion, to ſacrifice ſincerity and good conſcience, to injuſtice and oppreſſive power. In ſuch caſes, to uſe the words of a great man, "Conſent would be "conſpiracy, and open conteſtation is not "faction or ſchiſm, but due Chriſtian ani-"moſity."*

Yet ſtill the *Roman* church inſiſts, "that "the *true church* of Chriſt can be no other "than the *catholick*, which alone has had "a *viſible being* in the world, ever ſince "Chriſt's time; not the Proteſtant or any "other modern ſect, which only came into "the world ſince 1500; for thoſe that came "into the world 1500 years after Chriſt, "came into the world 1500 years too late "to be the religion or church of Chriſt."† Hence they would infer, that Proteſtants by ſeparating from the church of *Rome*, ſeparated from the true church of Chriſt, and therefore muſt be guilty of ſchiſm. They ask with an air of triumph, "Where was "the Proteſtant religion before *Luther* and "*Calvin?*" and too often impoſe upon the weak and the injudicious by their confident aſſertion, that the Proteſtant religion had no being till fifteen hundred years after Chriſt.

But

* *Hales*'s Tracts, 194.

† Grounds of catholick doctrine, c. 1.

But I hope one plain and eaſy obſervation will abate this confidence, and be ſufficient to ſhew the weakneſs and falſhood of this aſſertion. We are to conſider two things in the Proteſtant reformation, which are very different from each other; the one, the *doctrines* which the Proteſtant reformation reſtored to their original purity; the other, the *free profeſſion* of theſe doctrines, and *open ſeparation* from the communion of the church of *Rome*, on account of them.

1. If we conſider the *doctrines* the Proteſtant reformation reſtored to their original purity, they are the very doctrines taught by Chriſt and his apoſtles. Theſe doctrines ever were in the Bible, where the Popiſh corruptions of them never were. Theſe doctrines are ſo far from coming firſt into the world 1500 years after Chriſt, that they juſtly claim the higheſt and moſt venerable antiquity, and the Proteſtant doctrine in the moſt eſſential points is only returning to the pure faith and worſhip of the apoſtolical church.

2. If we conſider the Proteſtant reformation as a *free profeſſion* of theſe doctrines, and *an open ſeparation* from the communion of the church of *Rome*, on account of them: we muſt indeed confeſs, that the church of *Rome* had long prevailed to hinder a free profeſſion of the truth againſt her

errors and corruptions, by all the cruel and oppreſſive methods of perſecution. The righteous and wiſe providence of God, tho' in many things to us unſearchable, permitted her to *make war with the ſaints and to overcome them.** There were indeed many perſons in *every age*, and in *moſt parts* of *Europe*, who all along *proteſted* againſt the uſurped power, the principal errors and corruptions of the *Roman* church; but they were *as witneſſes propheſying in ſackcloth*; † they were perſecuted and killed, wherever the power of the *Roman* church could reach them. Of this we have clear evidence, in the known hiſtories of *Claude* of *Turin*, *Berenger*, and their diſciples; of the *Albigenſes* and *Waldenſes*; of *Wickleff*, *John Huſs*, *Jerome* of *Prague*, their followers and others; ſo that all along, to the time of the reformation, there has been a *cloud of witneſſes proteſting* againſt the corruptions of Popery, and even ſealing their teſtimony with their blood. It was not indeed till about the year 1500, that God was pleaſed to raiſe up men of faithfulneſs and zeal, and in ſuch ſufficient numbers, that they were able to *protect themſelves* in a *free* and *open profeſſion* of truth againſt the oppreſſive power of the *Roman* church. So that the whole of this boaſt, [Where was the Proteſtant religion before *Luther?*] amounts to no

* Rev. xiii. 7. † Rev. xi. 3.

no more than this; God permitted the church of *Rome* long to oppoſe and perſecute truths *as antient as the Bible*, as the faith and practice of the apoſtles; till at length the good providence of God bleſſed many churches with *free liberty to profeſs with ſafety* the truths and practice of the moſt antient Chriſtian church. As then we ought to be ſenſible, how much we are indebted to the goodneſs of God, that the Proteſtant reformation began *ſo ſoon as it did*; we ought alſo to charge it as the great and grievous ſin of the *Roman* church, that it began *no ſooner*.

Hence finally we may obſerve, with what groundleſs confidence Papiſts aſſert, *their communion is the ſafer*, in the judgment of Proteſtants themſelves; becauſe "Proteſtants, they ſay, own the *Roman* church "wants nothing neceſſary to ſalvation; "whereas the *Roman* church with unanimous conſent believes and profeſſes, that "Proteſtancy unrepented of deſtroys ſalvation."*For it is manifeſt, that Proteſtants allow no ſuch thing, as that the communion of Papiſts is a ſafer way to ſalvation, than the communion of the Reformed churches. Proteſtants maintain, and prove, that the *Roman* communion holds many very dangerous errors and corruptions, together with the fundamental articles of the

* Knot *in* Chillingworth, *c.* 7. §. 6.

Chriſtian faith; that theſe errors and corruptions are of ſo dangerous nature and conſequence, as greatly to *hazard ſalvation.* In particular, we have ſeen the church of *Rome* is in very great danger of being cut off from the communion of the true church of Chriſt, by her ſchiſmatical principles: ſo far are we from allowing there is *greater ſafety* in the church of *Rome*, that we evidently prove there is *incomparably more danger* and *hazard of being ſaved* in the *Roman* communion, than in the communion of the Reformed Churches.

We have now ſeen one inſtance more of the errors and corruptions of Popery, and therein a further inſtance of our happineſs in the Proteſtant Reformation. Let us conſider what remains our care and duty to *improve* it. With what thankfulneſs and gratitude are we to own the goodneſs of God, which has beſtowed ſo great a bleſſing upon us; which has continued it to us by ſo many kind and wonderful providences; and which, we hope, deſigns to perpetuate this bleſſing to us by the happy proviſion of a *Proteſtant* ſucceſſion to our *Britiſh* crown: let us ſhew our thankfulfulneſs for this goodneſs of God, by an hearty and affectionate zeal for the ſecurity of *that government*, which, under God, is the *only viſible* ſecurity of our happineſs as a Proteſtant nation. Let

Let us not terrify our ſelves with any groundleſs fears of danger in our ſeparation from the *Roman* communion, in which there is ſo plain and evident danger of ſeparating ourſelves from Chriſt Jeſus the head of the church, and of incurring the guilt of damnable ſin; as we cannot profeſs and practiſe her errors and corruptions without falſhood and hypocriſy, which are damnable ſins.

But let us at the ſame time be watchful againſt the danger of ſchiſmatical principles, and a ſchiſmatical temper in ourſelves. We may fully prove the church of *Rome* to be ſchiſmatical, and yet be unable to vindicate ourſelves, and our own conduct from the ſame charge. It is more than poſſible there may be angry paſſions, uncharitable tempers, and unchriſtian animoſities on both ſides of a queſtion. When theſe ſhall be truly chargeable on both ſides, neither ſide can be excuſed from the imputation of ſchiſmatical principles more or leſs. Let us be careful to wipe off from ourſelves, as Proteſtants, this imputation, that we cannot avoid one "note of ſchiſm at leaſt, by "reaſon of our own mutual quarrels and "contentions."* We are *to contend earneſtly for the faith*, and *ſtand faſt in the liberty wherewith Chriſt has made us free*: that is our duty as Chriſtians: nor can we have

* Knot *in* Chillingworth, *c.* 5. §. 38.

have a cauſe more juſt and glorious in itſelf, or of more important concern to our own intereſts, than the cauſe of religious truth and liberty: but we are alſo to *keep the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace*, which is our duty as much as the other. Let us religiouſly avoid all groundleſs jealouſy, all uncharitable interpretation, and all unchriſtian cenſure of each other's actions: let us defend the truth with modeſty, temper, and charity; and neither the cauſe of truth, nor the honour of the Proteſtant Reformation, will ſuffer by the management. But if we contend even for the truth, with pride, paſſion, and uncharitableneſs, we ſhall diſſerve the truth, and diſhonour our ſelves: this will make it appear to the obſerving and the wiſe, that we have learned a skill of being in the wrong, at the ſame time we have a right cauſe to defend; and that we have found out an art, when we are diſputing for religion, to loſe our own religion in the diſpute. Shall a ſpirit of ambition and worldly intereſt firmly unite our enemies againſt us, and ſhall not the honour of God, and the ſpirit of Chriſtianity, as firmly unite us in the cauſe of truth and religion, againſt ſo great and dangerous corruptions of both? To conclude,

Let us principally aim, by the grace of God, to improve the invaluable bleſſing of the Reformation, by a more conſtant and powerful

powerful influence of the excellent principles of the true Chriſtian faith and practice on our hearts and lives, that we may grow in *every grace* of a true Chriſtian, as well as in the *true knowledge* of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; that we may be better prepared for a more perfect ſtate of the church, than we can hope to enjoy in this world; and that we may at the laſt attain the full communion of the glorious church above, in its heavenly ſtate of perfection and happineſs.

Let this doctrine then excite in us a more ſerious care to preſerve the hopes and privileges of the true church of God to ourſelves, to prevent the *ſleights of men, and cunning craftineſs whereby they lie in wait to deceive*, * from prevailing over us: let the danger of being cut off from the privileges and bleſſings of the church of God, in ſeparating ourſelves from Chriſt the head, by departing from the faith and obedience of his goſpel, make us tremble at the thoughts of Popery; which impoſes the profeſſion and practice of ſuch errors and corruptions as muſt greatly expoſe us to the guilt of hypocriſy and damnable ſin, to the danger of being cut off from the internal communion of the Catholick church: let it be our conſtant care to know the mind of Chriſt better, from his own word

* Epheſ. iv. 14.

word of revelation: let us receive all his doctrines, directions, rules, and orders, with religious reverence and affection: let us consider them, on the one hand, as the laws of Christ's spiritual kingdom, and on the other hand, as the means of his grace, to bring us to his glory: let every thing have the authority and obligation of religion with us, which Christ has made a part of his religion: then will our religion be a fair image of God's perfection, a conformity to the doctrine and the life of Christ in all goodness, righteousness, and true holiness; then we shall *continue in the goodness of God*, and finally attain that *eternal glory unto which he has called us by Christ Jesus, to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever*, Amen.

F I N I S.

Next Week will be publish'd,

THE second Edition of a Dissertation on 2 *Thes.* ii. 1,-12. In which 'tis shewn that the Bishop of *Rome* is the Man of Sin, that the whole Prophesy in that Chapter is applicable to him, and his Adherents, and to them alone; nor can we at this Day describe the Apostasy of the Church of *Rome* in a more concise and lively Manner than the Apostle has done in that short and remarkable Prophesy. By the Author of the Paraphrase and Notes on St. *Paul*'s Epistles to *Philemon*, First and Second to the *Thessalonians*, First and Second to *Timothy* and *Titus*; in Imitation of Mr. *Locke*'s manner, which completes St. *Paul*'s Epistles.

PERSECUTION *and* CRUELTY *in the Principles, Practices, and Spirit of the* Romiſh *Church.*

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT

SALTERS-HALL,

APRIL 10, 1735.

By *B. GROSVENOR*, D. D.

Longe diverſa ſunt carnificina & pietas; nec poteſt veritas cum vi, aut juſtitia cum crudelitate conjungi.

LACT. i. 5.

Infinitely more Chriſtian Blood having been ſhed by the Papal Empire, and its agents, for not complying with the idolatry of its worſhip, than ever was ſhed by *Rome* Heathen.

Dr. GEDDES, *V.* III. *Eſſay* VI.

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JOHN xvi. 2.

They ſhall put you out of the ſynagogues; yea, the time cometh that whoſoever killeth you will think that he doeth God ſervice.

THESE words may be conſidered as a *prophecy*, or as a *caution*. As a prophecy they have been dreadfully fulfilled, by perſecutors in all ages; in defiance of the caution contained in them. As a caution, they are entered againſt the moſt plauſible pretence for perſecution in the world; *viz. thinking they do God ſervice*. For if any thing in the world could ſanctify ſo wicked a thing as perſecution, it would be the thinking to do God ſervice thereby. But this caution is added here, to prevent any man's thinking ſo.

I am ſorry it has had ſo little effect: ſo little, that men have rather ſeemed intent upon fulfilling the *prophecy*, than obſerving

the *caution*; as if they concluded, that *killing men*, if it was not indeed *ſerving God*, yet it was ſerving the church, and that would content them as well: or elſe, might one not have expected that theſe words of Chriſt ſhould have prevented a great deal of miſchief that has been done in the world? Are they not ſpoken with an air of indignation, at ſo unnatural a conceit, and ſo vile a practice? A practice declared here, by Chriſt, to proceed from ignorance of God and Chriſt, *ver.* 3. *And theſe things will they do unto you, becauſe they have not known the Father nor Me. q. d.* "They "know nothing of the goodneſs of the "Father, or the grace of the Son. If they "knew God, they would know, that he "*deſireth not the death of a ſinner, but ra-*"*ther that he would turn and live.* If they "knew Chriſt, they would know, that the "*Son of man came not into the world to de-*"*ſtroy mens lives, but to ſave.* If they "knew any thing of natural or revealed "religion, they would know, that both "concur in that golden rule, of *doing to* "*others as we would be done unto.*"

But inſtead of that, theſe ſons of violence have all along acted, as if Chriſt had ſaid--- *Theſe things they will do, becauſe* I have given them commiſſion ſo to do; *as if* they had a commiſſion for doing that which, Chriſt ſays, they will do, becauſe they

know

know not the Father nor him. It appears then, that

Perſecution proceeds from an ignorance of God and religion.* Ignorance and cruelty go together, and are a ſupport to each other; they are *the dark places of the earth*, that are *full of the habitations of cruelty*, and will be *cruel*, as long as they remain *dark*; and are kept dark, that they may continue cruel. Ill-nature, intereſt, love of plunder, or of dominion, have their ſhare in the buſineſs of perſecution, no doubt; but ignorant zeal will go a great way in it, where there is not ſo much malignity; as will appear in two inſtances I will preſent you with.

The one is of *Saul*, Acts xxvi. 9. *I verily thought that I ought to do many things, contrary to the name of Jeſus of Nazareth. Which things I alſo did at Jeruſalem: many of the ſaints I ſhut up in priſon, having authority from the chief prieſts: and when they were put to death I gave my voice againſt them; and I puniſhed them in every ſynagogue, and compelled them to blaſpheme: and being extremely* MAD *againſt them, I perſecuted them to ſtrange cities.* He calls it MADNESS here, and imputes it to *ignorance* elſewhere, 1 *Tim.* i. 13. *I did it ignorantly ----I was injurious, and a perſecutor. Paul* the

* Pſalm liii. 1. *Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge, who eat up my people as they eat bread?*

the Chriſtian condemns what was done by *Saul* the Jew, and owns it was *injurious*; notwithſtanding *he verily thought he ought to do many* ſuch things, and notwithſtanding his *authority from the high-prieſt*.----- How far ignorance will excuſe, and whether a man acts from ignorance or malignity, God is the judge.

The other inſtance is *Luther:* in the days of his ignorance he owns himſelf a mad perſecutor.---- In the preface to his Works he ſays, *Above all things I requeſt the pious reader, and beſeech him, for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt's ſake, that he read my books with judgment, and with much pity; and let him remember that I was once a Monk, and a mad Papiſt. And when I firſt undertook this cauſe, I was ſo drunk, and drowned, with the Popiſh doctrine, that I was ready, if I could, to have* KILLED ALL MEN, *or to have aſſiſted others in doing ſo, who withdrew their obedience from the Pope but in one ſyllable.* *

Too much of the principles and ſpirit of perſecution came over with the Reformers themſelves:

* Ante omnia oro pium lectorem, & oro propter ipſum Dominum noſtrum Jeſum Chriſtum, ut iſta legat cum judicio, imo cum multa miſeratione; & ſciat me fuiſſe aliquando Monachum, & Papiſtam inſaniſſimum; cum iſtam cauſam aggreſſus ſum ita ebrium, imo ſubmerſum in dogmatibus Papæ, ut paratiſſimus fuerim, omnes, ſi potuiſſem, occidere, aut occidentibus co-operari & conſentire, qui Papæ vel una ſyllaba obedientiam detractarent. *Melchior Adam Vita Luth.*

themſelves: nor could that leaven preſently be worked out. *Luther* was againſt putting falſe teachers to death, afterward; but he was for almoſt all other puniſhments the magiſtrate could inflict. *Calvin* was a man of excellent learning, piety, and parts; the Reformation owed a great deal to his diligence, courage, and fine pen: but he wrote a treatiſe of the lawfulneſs of putting hereticks to death; and made the beſt defence he could for the hand he had in an inſtance of that nature. *Beza* was a diſciple of *Calvin*, and grew up to be as great a man. He wrote in defence of perſecution, a treatiſe, which the Papiſts knew how to make their advantage of, to the running down of many a poor ſufferer. * *Henry* the Eighth, who had ſo great a hand in ſhaking off the *Roman* yoke, put men to death for opinions. *Edward* the Sixth was over-perſuaded by *Cranmer* to commit ſome to the flames.----It is pity ſuch lovely names as *Edward* the Sixth, and *Cranmer*, ſhould be mentioned to any diſadvantage, in the ſame line with perſecution and blood. The ſeverities in Queen *Elizabeth*'s reigns, for the ſake of uniformity in ſervice and ſentiments, were a great blemiſh to the Proteſtant name. And if we trace this matter farther downwards, we ſhall find reaſon

* Inter Bezæ Tractat. Theolog. Impr. 1570. De Hæreticis à magiſtratu puniendis.

reaſon to own, that all parties and denominations, in their turn, have had a notion of ſerving God by doing miſchief to men, men who did not know ſo much, or could not believe as they pleaſed, or would not lye, in profeſſing to believe what they did not. The proceedings of ſtar-chamber, high-commiſſion, and ſpiritual courts, do abundantly ſhew, that the ſpirit of the church, and the ſpirit of Chriſt, are not always the ſame. We hereby ſee the power of prepoſſeſſion, and rooted opinion, that with a Proteſtant people it ſhould require almoſt 200 years to get rid of ſo wicked a principle, and practice, as that of perſecution; which is here declared to proceed from ignorance of God and Chriſt, and elſewhere, from malignity and hatred of goodneſs; is made the mark of antichriſt, or of a falſe church.

The perſecution and cruelty of this falſe church being my part to conſider, I ſhall give you the *notion* of perſecution in general; and make good the *charge* of it upon the *Romiſh* church, from their *principles*, *practices*, and *ſpirit*; and then cloſe with ſome remarks.

I. I am to ſtate the *notion* of perſecution in general.

My notion of perſecution is this---When a man is hurt in any of his civil rights, without

without any civil forfeiture or crime, merely on account of the faith he believes, or the worſhip he practiſes; when that faith and worſhip have nothing in them inconſiſtent with the civil intereſts of the community, and the peace of the publick; and the man is able and ready to give all legal ſecurity to the government for the publick peace.

The uſe of force, or of pains and penalties, againſt ſuch perſons, merely on account of their religious opinions, by which opinions the civil intereſts of the ſociety are no ways affected; and the man in all other reſpects a good ſubject; this is perſecution. And this is the caſe of poor Proteſtant ſufferers, who have nothing in the principles of their religion that ſhould hinder them from being good ſubjects, where-ever their lot is caſt. But can this be pleaded for Papiſts? thoſe, at leaſt, of them, who avow the *depoſing power* and perſecuting principles; or refuſe to renounce them; in ſuch manner as a Proteſtant ſtate may depend on, if there be any ſuch manner to be found out. The breach of the civil peace deſerves the animadverſion of the civil power, from whatſoever it proceeds. It's all one to the magiſtrate, whether ſuch breach of the peace proceeds from a miſtaken conſcience, or from none at all. His buſineſs is to keep the peace, *that under him*

we may live peaceable and quiet lives in all godlineſs; and conſequently, he is to protect every man's liberty of conſcience, among other parts of his office; and *be a terror to thoſe evil doers* who would take away that liberty, where that liberty has no ill effect at all upon the publick peace. A liberty, to which we have a natural right, as men, and reaſonable creatures; a divine right, as Chriſtians; and a civil right, as *Engliſhmen*; ſo long as none of theſe rights are forfeited by any opinions, or practices, inconſiſtent with the common enjoyment of the ſame rights.

II. I am to make good the *charge* of perſecution upon the church of *Rome*.

This may ſeem a very needleſs undertaking; as going about to prove what every body knows; what is hardly denied by Papiſts themſelves; unleſs when they have a proſelyte under management, who has more faith in the prieſts than in the hiſtory of all ages; then, the miſſionary may venture to ſay, that the ſtories of Popiſh cruelties are all Proteſtant lies. And yet,

They know where to find thoſe *decrees* of councils, thoſe *canons* and conſtitutions of churches, that enjoin upon princes the perſecution of their Proteſtant ſubjects under the ſevereſt penalties. They know that to avoid theſe penalties, Popiſh princes have

in

in all ages exerciſed barbarous cruelties upon their Proteſtant ſubjects. They know that their *biſhops* at their conſecration are ſworn, *that they will perſecute hereticks to the utmoſt of their power.** They know that if princes are remiſs in the affairs of extirpating ſuch as the church condemns, whether that remiſſneſs be from pity, or any remainders of humanity, not quite extinguiſhed by that inhuman religion, they are to be *excommunicated*; and if they perſiſt in their merciful diſpoſition, they are to be *depoſed*, and their ſubjects to be abſolved from their oath of allegiance, and their dominions *diſpoſed* of to others, more zealous, and more deſerving.

Thus all poſſible ways are taken to engage all ſorts of people into their perſecuting meaſures; clergy, laity, princes and ſubjects; and therefore thoſe bloody things that have been done by them are not ſo much the exceſſes of particular perſons, or the ſudden tranſports of provocation, nor the effect of oppreſſion, that ſometimes *makes a wiſe man mad*; but the natural effect of their eſtabliſh'd doctrines, the *principles* of their religion, and *practice* upon thoſe principles: the *ſpirit* of Popery itſelf being cruelty and tyranny; of ſuch a

* Pontificale Roman. edit. Antwerp. A. D. 1626. One part of the oath is, *Hæreticos ſchiſmaticos aut rebelles eidem Domino noſtro vel ſucceſſoribus prædictis, pro poſſe perſequar & impugnabo.*

nature, and ſo circumſtanced, that, as it is not *mended* yet, ſo I do not ſee how it ever *can be*.---- Of each of theſe a little, as our time will allow.

§ 1. Perſecution of men whoſe conſcience cannot comply with their doctrine and worſhip, let them be never ſo good ſubjects in all other reſpects, is among the *principles* of their religion.

It is not only *permitted*, as what *may* be done, but *commanded*, as what *ought* to be done. Not only commanded, but *inforced* by the ſevereſt penalties; and encouraged by the greateſt privileges. It is a ſpecimen only that I can lay before you, * and for a taſte.---In the fifth council of *Toledo*, Can. 3. the holy fathers ſay,

We the holy council promulge this ſentence, or decree pleaſing to God, That whoſoever hereafter ſhall ſucceed to the kingdom, ſhall not mount the throne till he has ſworn among other oaths, to permit no man to live in his kingdom who is not a Catholic. (NULLUM NON CATHOLICUM.) *And if after he has taken the reins of government, he ſhall violate this promiſe, let him be anathema maranatha in the ſight of the eternal*

* They who have a mind, may ſee a large collection of decrees of councils, canons and conſtitutions of churches, royal edicts, imperial mandates, and Popes bulls for the extirpating of hereticks; in a book intitled---*A diſcourſe concerning the laws eccleſiaſtical and civil made againſt hereticks*, &c. Reprinted in the year 1723.

eternal God, and become fuel of the eternal fire, (PABULUM IGNIS AETERNI.)*

The council of *Lateran* under Pope *Innocent* III. They ſay, *We excommunicate, and anathematize all hereſy, condemning all hereticks, by what names ſoever they are called.* And if that were all, thoſe would not be much frighted, at being turned out of a wicked church, who ſee it their duty to *come out from amongſt them. Rev.* xviii. 4. --But it follows--*Theſe being condemned, muſt be left to the ſecular power to be puniſhed.*† *And thoſe who are only ſuſpected of hereſy, if they purge not themſelves in the appointed way, are to be excommunicated; and if within a year ſatisfaction is not given, they are to be condemned as hereticks.*------By the ſame council it is ordained, that---the ſecular powers ſhall be admoniſhed, and induced, and if need be ſhall be *compelled,* by church cenſures, let them be of what office ſoever (*cujuſcunque officii,*) as they would be counted believers, ſo for the defence of the faith, they muſt take this oath ---*that they will endeavour,* bona fide, *and with all their might, to exterminate from every part of their dominions all heretical ſubjects, univerſally, that are mark'd out to them by the church. So that from this time*

* Caranza Sum. Conciliorum, p. 404.

† Cap. 3. De hæreticis, Caranza, p. 602. Anathematis gladio feriantur, & uſque ad ſatisfactionem condignam ab omnibus evitentur.

*time forward, when any one is promoted to any power ſpiritual or temporal, he ſhall be obliged to confirm this.---But if any temporal lord, being required and admoniſhed by the church, ſhall neglect to purge his land from this heretical filthineſs, he ſhall be tied up in the band of excommunication by the metropolitan and his comprovincial biſhops.--- And if he ſhould neglect to make ſatisfaction within a year, it ſhould be ſignified to the Pope, that he might from that time pronounce the ſubjects abſolved from allegiance to him, and expoſe his territories to be ſeized on by catholicks, who expelling hereticks ſhall poſſeſs them without contradiction.**

You ſee the *penalties* for not perſecuting Proteſtants when it is in their power; depoſition, and loſs of their territories, in this life; and hell-fire in the next.

Let us now take notice of the *privileges* granted to thoſe who do labour in this bleſſed

* Cap. 3. Moneantur autem & inducantur, & ſi neceſſe fuerit compellantur, ſæculares Poteſtates, *cujuſcunque officii*; etiam ſicut reputari cupiunt & haberi fideles---ſubjectos univerſos hæreticos ab eccleſia denotatos, *bona fide, pro viribus* exterminare ſtudeant.---

Si vero dominus temporalis requiſitus, & monitus ab eccleſia, terram ſuam purgare neglexerit ab hac hæretica fœditate, per metropolitanum & comprovinciales epiſcopos *excommunicationis vinculo innodetur.* Et ſi ſatisfacere contempſerit infra annum, ſignificetur hoc ſummo pontifici, ut ex tunc ipſe vaſallos ab ejus fidelitate denunciet abſolutos, et *terram exponat catholicis occupandam, qui eam, exterminatis hæreticis, ſine ulla contradictione poſſideant.*

bleſſed work of extirpation.---In the ſame chapter it is added: *But catholicks, who having taken the badge of the croſs, ſhall ſet themſelves to extirpate hereticks, ſhall enjoy the ſame indulgence, and be fortified with the ſame privilege, as is granted to thoſe who go to the recovery of the holy land.**

And elſewhere I find a releaſe from *penances* promiſed, and a *greater degree of everlaſting happineſs than others may expect.* ----Such *penalties* upon the neglect of extirminating hereticks, and ſuch *rewards* promiſed for doing it! Is there a religion under the cope of heaven ſo calculated for ſpoil, and ruin, and general deſtruction of *peace on earth, and good-will to men, as this?*

Since it appears to be a principle of the *Romiſh* church, that hereticks are to be deſtroyed, it's time to enquire who are hereticks in their account.---I have enquired---- and find, that all they who neglect the *authority* of the church, meaning their own church for ever; † all who obſtinately defend

* Concil. Lateran. c. 3. De privilegiis conceſſis catholicis qui hæreticorum exterminio inſiſtunt.

N. B. *This* Lateran *council was fully eſtabliſhed by that of* Trent, *and the decrees of it are now in full force at* Rome.

Dr. BROUGHTON, in his Great Apoſtacy, publiſhed in the year 1717.

† Catechiſ. ad Parochos ex Decret. Concil. Trident. & Pii V. Pont. Max. *Lugd.* 1676.

ſend *wicked opinions*; * of which they will be the only judges; all who refuſe to *clear* themſelves, upon oath, in anſwer to all queſtions; all who think otherwiſe of the *ſacrament* of the body and blood of Chriſt, or of any other ſacrament, or of any other *article* of faith, than their church thinks; all who believe not as the church of *Rome* believes; whoſoever ſhall not obey the Pope's *ſtatutes*, is an heretick; every one who denies the *authority* of a general council to be *derived from Chriſt*, and that all are to obey it; every one that thinks a general council can *err* in matters that belong to faith and good manners, is to be accounted an heretick. † And, finally, to make ſure work of it, all thoſe are hereticks who are not of their *communion:* So that it is in effect to ſay---that all the world muſt be deſtroyed but themſelves, to make way for them to poſſeſs the earth alone: and truly they went a great way to make this remark literally true with regard to the new world, when firſt found out; for, according to the account of one of their own biſhops, in the ſpace of forty years they deſtroyed fifty millions of people. ‖ Agreeable to Dr. *Geddes*'s notion of Popery, as a *political*

* Concil. Conſt. Seſſ. 45.

† Binn. Tom. 8. p. 128.

‖ Biſhop of *Chiapa*'s account of the cruelty of the *Spaniards* in *America*.

tical combination, managed by falſhood and cruelty, to eſtabliſh a temporal empire in the perſon of the Popes : * and I add---under the pretence of another world, to ingroſs this world to themſelves. I proceed to ſhew,

§. 2. That as perſecution of thoſe who differ from them, is their principle, ſo it has ever been their *practice*, whenever it has been in their power. The thunder of theſe decrees were uſually attended with ſhowers of blood. You can hardly view a ſpot of ground in the map of *Europe*, that has not been ſtained with blood of their ſhedding: you can hardly open an hiſtory of any age ſince the man of ſin ſet up himſelf *above all that is called God*, without meeting with ſome bloody tragedy acted upon theſe principles.

That barbarous decree of the council of *Lateran*, under Pope *Innocent* III, inſerted by *Gregory* IX. into the decretals, which is the law of their church, and part of which paſſes with them for divine law---that barbarous decree, I ſay, was put in execution in the days of that very Pope; for he employed armies againſt the *Albigenſes* (the predeceſſors of the Proteſtants in *France*) who deſtroyed above 200,000 in the ſpace

* *Burnet*'s Hiſt. Ref. Vol. 3. p. 176.

of ſome months.* Pope *Julius* II. is ſaid to have occaſioned the ſlaughter of 200,000 Chriſtians in the ſpace of ſeven years. † *Perionius* avers (as quoted by Dr. *Moor*) that in *France* alone, in that great perſecution againſt the *Albigenſes* and *Waldenſes*, there were murdered no leſs than 1,000,000. From the beginning of the order of the Jeſuits, to the year 1580, *Baldwinus* reports, there were about 900,000 of the orthodox Chriſtians murdered; that is, within the ſpace of thirty or forty years. And the *holy inquiſition*, as *Vergerius* witneſſeth, (one well acquainted therewith) in leſs than thirty years ſpace, conſumed 150,000 with all manner of cruelty !‡ Inſomuch that two very learned and judicious perſons, Mr. *Joſeph Mede*, and Dr. *Geddes*, ſpeaking of the Popiſh perſecutions, the former gives it as his opinion, that the deſtruction made upon the church by the Papiſts was equal to that of the firſt ten Pagan perſecutions. Dr. *Geddes* goes further, and aſſerts, *that infinitely more Chriſtian blood has been ſhed by the papal empire, and its agents, for not complying with the*

* *Clarkſon* in his Practical Divinity of Papiſts deſtructive of Chriſtianity, *p.* 206.

Vid. Jo. Paul.
Perin. de Albig.

† Dr. *Moor*'s Divine Dialogues.

‡ Dr. *Moor* ubi ſupra.

Vid. *Limborch*'s hiſtory of the inquiſition tranſlated into *Engliſh* by the Rev. Mr. *S. Chandler*.

the idolatry of its worſhip, than ever was ſhed by Rome *Heathen.** In the ſhort reign of Queen *Mary*, Biſhop *Burnet* ſays, there were two hundred and eighty-four burnt, tho' he adds, that *Grindal*, that lived in that time, writes, that in two years eight hundred were burnt, many more impriſoned, 60 died in priſon; and others after much cruel uſage, *Bonner* himſelf often diſciplining them with whips and tortures, were prevailed on to abjure; but carried in their mind a deep averſion to that cruelty, which had tempted them to ſuch apoſtaſy.† In the maſſacre of *Paris*, which begun a general ſlaughter of the Proteſtants over the kingdom, the number taken off is computed at 100,000.‡ The horrors of that night are not to be conceived, much leſs expreſſed. - - - The fatal ſignal being given by the tolling of the bell of St. *German*'s, - - - - it was followed with a general riſing of the whole city of *Paris*. - - - The march of ſoldiers, the noiſe of their arms, and the lighting of ſo many torches, awaken'd the poor Proteſtants, who now ſaw their ruin near and inevitable. - - - I draw the

 curtain

* Dr. *Geddes*'s Tracts, Vol. 3. Eſſ. 6.

† *Burnet*'s Abridgment, p. 328.

‡ *Moor*'s Dial.

Vid. Biſhop *Burnet*'s Tracts.--A relation of the barbarous and bloody maſſacre of about an hundred thouſand Proteſtants begun at *Paris* and carried on over all *France* by the Papiſts in the year 1572, collected out of *Mezeray*, *Thuanus*, aad other approved authors.

curtain over the reſt. - - - - Proteſtants cannot well bear to hear what Papiſts take pleaſure in acting. - - - For which reaſon alſo I ſhall only mention the gunpowder treaſon with a ſhort remark. - - - It was formed upon theſe principles of their religion that you have heard. For if the decrees of councils for deſtroying hereticks be the dictates of the Holy Ghoſt; if the largeſt degrees of heavenly happineſs come to the ſhare of thoſe who do execute thoſe decrees; if killing men thus be ſerving God, the more of that work is done at a blow, the more to the purpoſe of the Holy Ghoſt, and of his councils and canons. Upon theſe principles I cannot ſee, but that if it were lawful to burn them one by one, it was as lawful to blow them up all together. - - - And if it had ſucceeded, I doubt not but there would have been a thankſgiving for it at *Rome*, as there was for the maſſacre of *Paris*, and two or three ſolemn days for that purpoſe, accompanied with a jubilee to all *Chriſtendom:* for which one of the reaſons given was - - - *that they ſhould thank God for the ſlaughter of the enemies of the Church lately executed in* France. *

The

* *Burnet*'s account, from whence I will add the following paſſage.----On the 28th of *Auguſt* a jubilee was granted to all who had been in this butchery; and they were commanded to go every where to church, and bleſs God for the ſucceſs of that action.

So

The *Iriſh* maſſacre was a bloody ſacrifice offered up from the ſame religion, wherein about 200,000 Proteſtants were cut off. Some of their prieſts expreſſing a little remorſe for what they had a hand in, could not obtain abſolution without recanting it, and went in the hazard of their lives. †

It will be ſaid theſe are old ſtories.---- I anſwer - - - Care has been taken to ſupply us with new ones, and to renew our alarms by later inſtances.

The perſecution in *France* under *Lewis* the XIVth, who in his minority was ſaved by his Proteſtant ſubjects, is deſcribed by an eye-witneſs || in a manner that would give

So little relenting had they after all theſe black crimes, that they imagined that they had done God good ſervice: and to that height did their impudence riſe, that they preſumed to addreſs to that merciful being, who abhors cruel and blood-thirſty men, and that with hands not only defiled with blood, but boaſting of it, as a ſacrifice offered to God; which had been a fitter oblation to him that was a liar and a murderer from the beginning, than the God of truth and father of mercies.

The Pope ſent Cardinal *Urſin* his legat to *France* to thank the king for ſo great ſervice done to the church, and to deſire him to go on, and extirpate hereſy root and branch, that it might never grow again.--And as the legat paſſed through in his journey to *Paris*, he gave a plenary abſolution to all that had been actors in the maſſacre.

† Sir *J. Temple*'s hiſt. of the *Iriſh* rebellion and maſſacre.

|| Biſhop *Burnet*'s ſermon for the exiles of the principality of *Orange*, 1704.

give us too much pain to repreſent. The principality of *Orange* afterwards felt the meaning of theſe perſecuting principles, when a body of dragoons were let looſe upon poor innocent creatures, guilty only of having the prince of *Orange* for their ſovereign, and Proteſtantiſm for their religion. They were required to abjure, or leave their country and all they had behind them. For tho' it was given out that they ſhould have three months to ſell their effects, this was made ineffectual by ſecret intimations, that thoſe who ſhould buy them would be look'd upon as favourers of hereſy; and it was infuſed into the people by the clergy, that it was a mortal ſin to furniſh them with any encouragement to go where they would live and die in hereſy.

The cruelties of *Thorn* are of later date. The Jeſuits contrivance to have them acted under the colour of puniſhing riot, was one part of the wickedneſs. * The aim was at the churches and ſchools, which they have now got the poſſeſſion of. The cardinal primate of *Poland* ſays, *the ſacred execution at* Thorn, *againſt the profaners of holy things, ought never to be forgotten.* † He ſeems to look back upon the beheading, and choppings, and manglings, and dreadful whippings,

* *Mottraye*, V. 3.

† Primate's letter to the Palatinates of *Poland*. Political ſtate, *Aug.* 1733.

pings, with pleaſure. - - - So the wolf licks his jaws after a bloody meal.

The poor *Saltzburghers* are before our eyes. - - - More of ſuch *ſacred* doings. - - - Stript of all they had in the world, and driven from their habitations by a bigotted prieſt and prince, who as a biſhop had ſworn it, and as a Popiſh prince was obliged to it. - - - They were firſt threatned with beheading, drowning, and ſending to the galleys. Their leaders were ſeized, and thrown into deep dungeons, and loaded with fetters; whilſt others were ſent away in ſo ſecret a manner, that their neareſt relations have not ſince been able to hear any thing of them. When theſe methods proved ineffectual, they were ſuddenly ordered to leave their country, in the depth of winter. This order was executed with the utmoſt rigor. Some were taken in the field, others dragg'd out of their beds, hardly being ſuffered to put on their cloaths, and the people in general obliged to depart without being permitted to ſell any of their effects, or take any thing neceſſary along with them. Huſbands were torn away from their wives, and ſent a wandring like vagabonds, deprived of all they had in the world. * Their caſe appear'd

* A ſerious call to the city of *London*, printed in 1732. which contains many paſſages printed from the account in high *Dutch*.

Daily Journal, Mund. Feb. 11. 1732.
Friday, Feb. 21, ditto.

appear'd ſo deplorable, that the emperor of *Germany*, tho' a Popiſh prince, graciouſly interpoſed in their favour, tho' to little purpoſe for the poor ſufferers; and perhaps he may incur the ſuſpicion of being a *favourer of hereticks* for it. However, it ſhows that in the ſufferings of theſe poor people there was no pretence for a charge of any criminal practices of a civil nature, but that it was all purely for conſcience. * *How long, Lord, holy and true!*

It is time I ſhould come to the third head of charge.

§. 3. The *ſpirit* of Popery is a cruel ſpirit. Cruelty is the genius of that religion. The religion itſelf teaches it, breathes it, every where, and inſpires it into its votaries. It is calculated to ſuppreſs the tendereſt emotions of humanity. If it does not effectually do it in every breaſt, no thanks to the religion. *That* teaches the husband to betray

* The firſt company of theſe fugitives were to the number of eight hundred, who ſpent five whole weeks in their journey before they met with any conſiderable relief; a fortnight of which they ſpent in wandering over mountainous places, not knowing whither they went; and when they arrived at the diſtrict of *Raſtadt*, they were almoſt famiſhed, having been in want of bread for three days together. The number of thoſe who have already left their country, with thoſe whom they expect will ſpeedily follow, amounts to upwards of fifteen thouſand perſons, all forſaking their houſes, lands, and neareſt relations, that they may obtain a better reſurrection. *Id. ib.*

betray the wife, the wife the husband, the daughter the mother, and the mother the daughter. * What could ever produce such a maxim, that it is no more sin to kill an heretick than a dog, † but that spirit of cruelty that has interwoven itself with their religion? Is it because they are conscious to themselves, that such absurd doctrines, and such fantastick worship, are no other way to be supported but by these terrors? Or else, why such severe punishments for difference of opinion? Why must mens minds be *searched* into, to find out personal sentiments by oaths *ex officio*, by articles contrived on purpose with a *barbed hook* for the conscience? Why *confiscation* of estate, *banishment*, *prison*, *torture*, for being mistaken, if it be a mistake, but from cruelty? Are these things the meaning of that text, 2 *Tim.* ii. 25. *In meekness instructing those who oppose themselves?* Why *death*, which cuts off all opportunity of knowing better, or of repentance? Or if it must be death, why so bitter a death as *burning*, the most tormenting of all deaths? Or if burning, why not the most *speedy* way of it? Why must a poor creature be roasted alive at a distant

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* *Clarkson*'s practical divinity of Papists, *ubi supra*, p. 328.

† A saying frequently in the mouth of the *Irish* murderers. *Vid. Clarkson*'s practical divinity of the Papists, *p.* 329.

ſtant fire?* Or if that muſt be, to comply with wicked canons of the church - - - why ſo much *pleaſure* and joy in the ſpectators, at the torture of a poor ſoul, who undergoes it all, rather than do what he thinks would diſpleaſe God, when the ſame people ſhall relent with pity at the ſight of the execution of a robber or a murderer? † Why

* Dr. *Geddes*'s account of the executions of the inquiſition.

† During Dr. *Geddes*'s reſidence at *Lisbon* he was preſent at a jayl-delivery of the priſoners of the inquiſition, where he ſaw with horror and deteſtation men cruelly burnt, or rather roaſted alive, becauſe they would not abjure that which they in their conſcience believed to be truth, one of them continued alive in the flames about two hours after he gave over ſpeaking, as he could perceive by the motion and lifting up of his hands. As long as they were able to ſpeak, they inceſſantly cried out, *Mercy*, *mercy*, *for the love of God*; but no mercy was to be obtained from their mercileſs perſecutors, who ſport themſelves with burning off their lips and noſes with lighted torches before the fire is kindled, and behold their ſevereſt agonies in the midſt of the flames with inexpreſſible delight: to ſuch degrees of helliſh cruelty can this antichriſtian religion excite men! The ſame people are otherwiſe good-natured enough, and cannot but look upon the ſufferings of common malefactors with great pity and compaſſion; but in the caſe of thoſe they call hereticks, they ſeem to be devoid of all humanity, and are poſſeſſed with ſuch an infernal fury as to aſſiſt at the executions of the *inquiſition* with the utmoſt height of ſatisfaction in their countenances, exulting and triumphing as cannot be imagined by thoſe who have not ſeen them.

Dr.

Why the addition of ſo cruel a *mockery*, as praying the magiſtrate *for the love of God, and in regard to piety and mercy, and of their mediation, to free this miſerable perſon from all danger of death, or mutilation of members?* When after all this grimace they know the magiſtrate muſt burn him. * What can be the true anſwer to all theſe queſtions, but --- CRUELTY? Or if all this might ſome way or other be excuſed, why muſt the ſpectators be forbid ſo much as to *pity* a poor ſufferer for conſcience? as they were in Queen *Mary*'s days.† And

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Dr. *Geddes*'s tracts againſt Popery, or his remains, *The publiſher to the reader*, p. 17.

Dr. *Geddes*, in his *View of the court of inquiſition in* Portugal, *with a liſt of the priſoners that came forth in an act of the faith celebrated at* Lisbon in the year 1682, gives an account of ſome young women that were in that priſon; and farther ſays, *Let theſe young-married women be kept never ſo long in the priſon of the inquiſition, their husbands, tho' never ſo fond of them, dare not for their lives expreſs the leaſt uneaſineſs at it; nor dare a parent for a child, nor a child for a parent.*

* Pontificale Rom. p. 456. 1611.

† *Burnet*'s Ref. hiſt. Vol. 3. introd. One letter of a more ſingular ſtrain was wrote to the Lord-mayor and the Sheriffs of *London*, to give ſubſtantial orders, (I give the words of the council-book) that when any obſtinate man, condemned by order of the law, ſhall be delivered to be puniſhed for hereſy, there be a good number of officers, and other men appointed to be at the execution, who may be charged to ſee ſuch as ſhall *miſuſe themſelves*, by COMFORTING, AIDING, or PRAISING the offender, to be apprehended.

in the perſecution of *Bohemia*, it was puniſhable by whips and pillory to give a little refreſhment to a godly ſufferer, ſo much as a bit of bread. *

Why are people forbid ſo much as to *pray* for the martyr in flames? Thus when cardinal *Beton* in *Scotland*, a wicked perſecuting prieſt, had got into his hands one of the moſt excellent men in the kingdom, the godly reformer Mr. *Wiſhart*, he was burnt alive before his palace window at St. *Andrew*'s. Upon the day of his execution, the cardinal cauſed it to be proclaimed thro' the city --- *that no one ſhould pray for him under the ſevereſt eccleſiaſtical cenſures.*† Is that Spirit which commands us to *pray for them that perſecute us*, the ſame with that which forbids praying for the perſecuted? Why do they ſhow an inclination to do all they can towards *damning* the ſoul, as well as burning the body? Thus when *John Huſs* was condemned to be burnt by the council of *Conſtance*, in violation of the emperor's faith given him for his ſafe return, ſeven biſhops degraded him: and then a paper mitre was put upon his head in form of a pyramid, and the height of a cubit, on which they had painted three devils

* Jurieu, Prejugez contre Papiſme, partie ſeconde, ch. 26, 27.

† *Keith*'s account of *Scotch* affairs, as to the cardinal's forbidding to pray for him.

vils of an horrible ſhape, with this inſcription, *Hæreſiarcha.* And in this condition the prelates delivered his body to be burnt, adding theſe words, and *we devote thy ſoul to the devils in hell.** Whereas, when our judges pronounce ſentence upon the worſt malefactors, they don't make ſport with their miſeries, nor give them to the devil, but pray, - - - *the Lord have mercy upon thy ſoul.* - - - What anſwer can be given to theſe queſtions? Or what account of theſe practices, but - - - Cruelty? St. *John* in the *Revelation* has finely repreſented this cruelty of ſpirit of their church by the image of a woman drunk with blood, chap. xvii. 6. *And I ſaw the woman, the great whore that ſitteth upon many waters,* ver. 1. *(i. e.)* that rules and domineers over much people, has a juriſdiction which ſpreads far and wide, and from thence pretends to be the catholic church. *I ſaw the woman, drunken with the blood of the ſaints and martyrs of Jeſus*; and *when I ſaw her, I wondered with great admiration, (i. e.)* Wonderful cruelty! To be drunk, ſuppoſes the draughts to have been frequent, large, and pleaſant: no body chuſes to be drunk with what is unpleaſant to the palate. So that to be drunk with blood, ſuppoſes the draughts of blood to be frequent,

* *L' Enfant's* hiſt. of the council of *Conſtance*, Vol. 1. p. 426. Animam tuam devovemus diabolis infernis.

frequent, large, and pleaſant. And what a palate muſt that be to which blood is pleaſant, but cruelty itſelf? And as people when they are drunk talk nonſenſe, and do extravagant things; ſo this woman, having by cruelty and blood intoxicated herſelf with the grandeur thereby attained, ſhe ſays, and inſiſts upon it, that number one is number a thouſand, the ſame number one; that an inch is as long as five or ſix foot; that ſhe never did, nor can, tell a lye in her life, nor do any thing amiſs; and ſhe raves at every one that don't believe all this, and vows to be the death of them when ſhe gets them in her power. To proceed:

§. 4. As it does not appear that Popery is *mended* in theſe reſpects, ſo it is not eaſy to conceive how it ever ſhould.

Can theſe principles be diſowned, which are the dictates of the Holy Ghoſt? Thoſe decrees and canons that were framed by infallible councils, without giving up the doctrine of their infallibility? Is there any room for amendment without owning a miſtake?

Popery is ſtill animated by the ſame ſpirit of cruelty and fraud as ever; and notwithſtanding the politeneſs that reigns in the manners of the age, theſe principles would be received, and urged upon the conſciences of their votaries; and would be practiſed upon the merciful even of that com-

communion themſelves, if they ſhould decline to come into their cruel meaſures. Good-nature, relation, friendſhip, promiſes, muſt all give way to the utility of the church, *and doing God ſervice.* *

The treatment of our Proteſtant brethren abroad, the cruelties of the inquiſition, do in the moſt unanſwerable manner aſſure us, that Popery is the ſame bloody and deceitful thing as ever it was. Let ſome Papiſts be as well bred, and good-natured, and complaiſant as you pleaſe; and accompany their winning behaviour with many a donative among the poor, which at once procures the applauſe of the multitude, and paves the way for now and then a proſelyte --- I ſay --- whatever good qualities particular Papiſts may ſhew, their brethren abroad, as often as they are able, prove to us, that Popery itſelf is ſtill the ſame bloody and deceitful thing that ever it was; and ſome of their brethren at home too have ſo little command of themſelves, as to inſult Proteſtants in their own country, and under the protection of our laws, and in the very defiance to that connivance which they enjoy the benefit of.

Thus have I gone thro' what I propoſed, *viz.* to make good the charge of perſecuting *principles*, *practices* and *ſpirit*, on the church of *Rome*. I aim not at raiſing an indignation

* *Decret.* lib. 2. tit. 27. c. 27. *Quia non.*

indignation againſt perſons, but againſt principles. I would be as tender of the perſons of thoſe who are unhappily deceived into ſuch notions, as Chriſtianity obliges me, and ſelf-defence will allow. I pray for their converſion, relieve the needy of them, and pity the diſtreſſed, and am deeply concerned for the great hazard of their ſalvation in Popery, which is ſo adapted to ſpoil Chriſtianity, as poiſon mixed with a cordial of the higheſt name. For I cannot but be of the mind, that Popery as ſuch is not Chriſtianity. No, Antichriſt is not Chriſt; idolatry and ſuperſtition is not goſpel worſhip; the maſs is not the Lord's ſupper; perſecution with fire and ſword is not among the means of grace; killing men is not *ſerving of God*; prayers in an unknown tongue are not a reaſonable ſervice; cruelty is not goſpel charity; without which, tho' *I had all knowledge, and did all miracles, yet I were nothing*. Nothing is not every thing, or the only thing. They ſay they have the eſſentials of Chriſtianity. I anſwer, ſo have we, and need not go to them for any thing, nor borrow any thing from them. So has a man that has the plague, all the eſſentials of a man, but then he has the plague beſides, and we avoid him. So the *voice from Heaven* ſays, *Come out from among them my people*, Rev. xviii. 4. for though a man may recover and live

that

that has the plague, the infection is mortal in its nature.

To close now with a few remarks.

1. See what we were *delivered from* at the glorious revolution, and renew your thankfulness to God for it. Our religion in their stile, you know, is the pestilent *Northern* heresy; and their religion, we have seen, obliges them to extirpate the same to the utmost of their power. That therefore a prince, so well instructed in this religion, and so zealous for it, as *James* the IId was, should think himself obliged to use the power God had given for that purpose, was no more than shewing himself a good Catholick; and so much the better Catholick, by how much the worse prince to a Protestant nation. - - - The steps taken were very natural; but we remember with pleasure they were so hasty, as to render the design abortive. Their hastiness for our ruin, proved our salvation; as it even forced some to open their eyes, who were willing enough to sleep on, because it was in a whole skin. But when they saw the *English* monarchy turned into an arbitrary tyranny, and a dispensing power; charters taken away, and all back'd with an army of 40,000 men; not by consent of parliament, which makes our forces the people's

army, the nation's guard; but without parliament, and againſt parliament; officer'd with *French* and *Iriſh* Papiſts; to make room for whom, the Proteſtant officers were by various pretences turned out: they became ſenſible of the reaſonableneſs of ſelf-defence againſt *lawleſs power*; and in order to get rid of this *exotic* government and religion together, the nation, after many cries to heaven, caſt their eyes over to the prince and princeſs of *Orange*---and juſt as the knife was at our throat---away the hero came, with the PROTESTANT RELIGION AND THE LIBERTIES OF ENGLAND, in his ſtandard, in his heart, and in his righteous cauſe. - - - His memory will be glorious as long as there is any ſenſe of liberty, regard to religion, or love of our country remaining as long as we, or our poſterity, enjoy the happineſs of our Proteſtant ſucceſſion, which was one of the bleſſings wrapt up in that great deliverance.

2. See what you muſt *expect* upon the return of Popery in power. - - - What can be expected from theſe *principles* and this *ſpirit?* Read the book of *Martyrs*; the hiſtory of the *French* and *Bohemian* perſecutions, and expect the dregs of that bitter cup that has gone round to ſo many churches

churches in *Europe*. Read the hiſtory of the *inquiſition*, and expect all that may be expected from the ſpirit of revenge: Revenge for injury received, added to the inſtigation of a religion, not only cruel in its nature, but making a *merit* of being ſo. - - - -

The apprehenſion is dreadful! and the ſuppoſition is a reproach to the common ſenſe of our nation. But the annals of *England* ſhew us, that our valour has been often more conſpicuous than our underſtandings, and that the follies of one age have made hazardous work for the courage of another. So that dangers and deliverances, fooliſh diviſions, leading into ſtraits, and bold ſtrokes of courage in getting out of them, have made up the chequer-work of our hiſtory. I wiſh it may appear, that either our dangers or deliverances have made this age wiſer. - - - If we are ſo - - - then I add in the third place,

3. We ſhall do all we can, conſiſtently with our own principles, to *prevent the growth* of Popery in theſe kingdoms, and the return of that bloody religion.

They want numbers; the increaſing their numbers is what they are intent upon, and muſt be owned to be to their purpoſe. Scripture knows them not. An-

tiquity is ignorant of them. It's fooliſh in them to think of doing much by argument. Writing is only an amuſement, while they are buſy another way. To prevent their growing in numbers is what every one ſhould aſſiſt in, who has any eſtate to loſe; any conſcience to be diſtreſſed; any poſterity to be tender of; any love to his Proteſtant king and country. - - - What can be done? - - - We muſt not perſecute to prevent perſecution. - - - - But it is anſwered - - - Self defence is no perſecution. It is replied --- The methods of our ſelf-defence muſt be agreeable to the liberty of our conſtitution, and the rules of our bleſſed religion.---They know this, they make their advantage of it toward the ruin of that very conſtitution they enjoy the benefit of, and under the gentle ſpirit of that bleſſed religion they ſeek to deſtroy.----For which reaſon, it is with an ill grace that they plead the benefit of either of them in their favour, who are continually labouring to deſtroy both.

Thoſe who avow the extirpation of all who differ from them, like *Iſhmael, their hand is againſt every man, if every man's hand ſhould be againſt them*, have they reaſon to complain? Men who are ſworn to a foreign juriſdiction, as their prieſts are; men whoſe principles and practices will

not

not permit us to imagine, they can give a legal ſecurity to the government, either as it is Proteſtant, or as it is ſettled upon the revolution foot: men who if they do ſwear to the government, are furniſhed with ſo many evaſions, equivocations, mental reſervations, diſpenſations before-hand, or abſolutions afterward; that there is hardly any hold of them; nor any dependance on their renouncing the extirminating doctrines.---As ſoon as our connivance had increaſed their numbers ſufficiently, could we expect they would tolerate thoſe who now tolerate them, any more than in ages paſt? *Liberty of conſcience*, (as one ſays,) *is ridiculous in the mouth of a Papiſt, and not only ridiculous but perfidious, and inſincere, qualities inſeparable from their nature, for ſo many ages paſt. Since it is certain, they would not forbear three years, bringing thoſe to the ſtake, who would not go to Maſs, had they once more the power in their own hands.** And yet I ſay it again, we muſt not perſecute; but whatever can be done, without that, ought to be done, for ſelf-defence, to prevent their increaſe, to reſtrain their power, and to cut off opportunity of their doing us miſchief?---We leave that to the wiſdom of the nation.

In

* *Bayle's* comment. Vol. 1. p. 6.

In the laſt place:

4. The *guilt* of ſo much blood and cruelty, is an heavy *load* upon that church, that will ſurely bring her down, and ſink her as a milſtone into the ſea; when God maketh inquiſition for blood, *in her will be found the blood of the ſaints, and of all that were ſlain upon the earth*, Rev. xviii. 24. It will be found belonging to her account, ſome way or other; as owing to her *principles*, or ſhed by her *inſtigation* or with her *approbation*. *The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the ground*, ſaid God to the firſt perſecutor; the voice of all this blood of our brethren has been crying from the ground a long time; in conjunction with the cry of the *ſouls* under the altar. ---*How long, oh Lord, holy and true, e'er thou avenge our blood?* together with the cry of the *prayers* of his people, who frequently ſay---*Let* Babylon *come in remembrance before thee*.---Theſe cries are heard---and will be anſwered.---*He will judge the great whore, that has corrupted the earth, and will avenge the blood of his ſervants at her hands*, Rev. xix. The kings of the earth, who have hitherto been terrified into a fooliſh ſubjection to the inſolence and craft of men they ought to have controuled; men they have a rightful dominion over; theſe kings of the earth will

come

come to their ſenſes; and *ſhall hate the whore, and ſhall make her deſolate, and naked, and eat her fleſh, and burn her with fire, for God hath put it into their hearts to fulfil his will.* And when that bleſſed day ſhall come, wherein the angel with a mighty voice ſhall proclaim, *Babylon the great, is fallen, is fallen*; --- there breaks out an univerſal Allelujah, that ſhall fill heaven and earth with its harmony.---Every harp and every tongue employed, and every ſoul in rapture with melodious joy. May you and I be there, and bear our part.

F I N I S.

Mr. *LEAVESLY*'s

SERMON

PREACH'D AT

SALTERS-HALL,

APRIL 17, 1735.

[Price Six-Pence.]

HEBREWS xi. 8.

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out, *into a place which he ſhould after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.*

THE reſtleſs attempts of the *Roman* power, by its emiſſaries every where, to bring Proteſtants again into bondage, have inſpir'd the concern for your eſtabliſhment in truth and liberty, which has been expreſſed in a courſe of ſermons in this place. Popery has been truly repreſented to you; and the artful diſguiſes of it, to hide its frightful deformity, have been taken off; that you might ſee it naked and uncolour'd.

In

In 1685, Dr. *Wake*,* the now primate of the church of *England*, obſerv'd; It is a long time ſince it has been reſolv'd by many of their Caſuiſts, that it is lawful to diſguiſe the ſentiments of their religion, not only in private conferences, but in the very pulpit itſelf, when there is a ſufficient reaſon for the doing of it. But, ſays he, I cannot tell whether it be ſo generally known, that it is lawful for them to ſet their hands, and to approve thoſe books whoſe principles and doctrine they diſlike, by an art peculiar to themſelves, and which Proteſtants who are uſed to ſincere dealing will find it a little difficult to believe. You have been again and again warn'd of this; and their claims and principles have been ſet before you truly, that you might form a judgment of them for your own conduct, and your converſe with any that are deceiv'd, or would pervert you.

If there be any true logick or reaſoning in the world, we muſt conclude, that a reformation, from ſuch a diſorder'd ſtate of religion, is neceſſary for all thoſe who would pleaſe and honour God, and adhere to Jeſus Chriſt, and ſave their own ſouls.

This is what is now incumbent on me, to make and maintain this inference, and impreſs it on your mind; and I am perſuaded that

* Preface to the expoſition of the doctrine of the church of *England*, &c.

that any but thoſe that have eyes, and yet will not ſee, any that will but open their eyes muſt ſee that,

It was the moſt reaſonable and neceſſary thing to attempt and carry on that reformation, which all the Chriſtian world, except the uſurpers themſelves, requir'd, and cry'd out for; and even thoſe uſurpers were conſtrain'd to make ſome profeſſions of that neceſſity, and ſome feign'd ſhews of intending to do that work themſelves, that others more hearty and ſincere might drop it, and leave it to their more artful management.*

It muſt be confeſs'd that theſe corrupters of religion had, with exquiſite craft, ſet the true articles of the Chriſtian faith in the front of their impoſtures; they have own'd the divine inſpiration of the ſacred ſcripture; the articles of the apoſtles creed, and more, the *Nicene*, *Athanaſian* creeds, eſtabliſhed by the councils. And what, would you reform from theſe? Are not theſe

* *Anno* 1523. *Adrian* gave commiſſion to his nuntio in *Germany* to confeſs, that the confuſion was cauſed by the ſins of men, eſpecially of the prieſts and prelates, confeſſing that ſome years ſince ſome abominations have been committed in that holy ſee; many abuſes in ſpiritual things, many tranſgreſſions of the commandments, and laſtly, all things turn'd to the worſt; ſo that it may be ſaid, the infirmity has paſs'd from the head to the members, from the Popes to the inferior prelates, inſomuch that there hath been none that doth good, no not one.

enough

enough to edify your ſouls, and ſecure your ſalvation? But pray let us ſee what is that long roll that is join'd with them, that muſt be taken and eaten together, that we muſt ſwallow down and concoct as well as we can, though our conſcience and all within us turn againſt it. Alas we find, that the *Trent* religion, *Pius*'s creed, has given us twelve articles of Chriſtian faith, only as the old *Romans* led their captives in triumph, while the following articles of Popery are to bear all the glory upon the neceſſity of our ſalvation; and believing in Chriſt will not avail us unleſs we ſwear obedience to the Pope.

Now what is this but to ſet *Solomon*'s porch to the houſe of *Baal*, or the temple of *Dagon?* This is no leſs impiety than that of the prieſt, that poiſon'd the emperor with a conſecrated hoſt. What greater diſhonour can be done to the word of God, than juſt to make it a preface to the traditions of men, whereby all the commandments of God are made void? Theſe ſhams of the *Samaritans* are only to delay and hinder the building of the houſe of God; *Let us*, ſay they, *build with you, for we ſeek your God as you do, and we do ſacrifice to him:** yet were they adverſaries of *Judah* and *Benjamin. Zerub-*

* Ezra iv. 2, 3.

babel

babel and *Jeſhua* the chief of the fathers of *Iſrael* declare to them, *You have nothing to do with us to build an houſe to our God, but we ourſelves together will build unto the Lord God of Iſrael. Then their enemies weakned their hands, and troubled them in building; and hired counſellors to fruſtrate their purpoſes, all the days of Cyrus king of Perſia.*

Thus it hath been a ſtale artifice of evil men and ſeducers, to mix truth with errors, to make poiſon palatable, that it may be taken without ſuſpicion, and work without fail; and ſo by catholick creeds, and the names of catholick church, and general councils and the like, many that have had a deteſtation for the encroachments of Popes, and their court and conſiſtories, are yet kept religiouſly in the communion of the *Roman* church, as they eſteem it; but for you fellow Proteſtants, we ſay, as the apoſtle *John*, 1 John ii. 11. *We have not preached, and written to you, becauſe you know not the truth, but becauſe you know it, and that no lye is of the truth.*

Our adverſaries with a ſovereign impudence would face us down, that notwithſtanding all we have and can ſay of the incroachments and uſurpations, tyranny and corruptions of the *Roman* church, we can have no right to ſeparate from her and reform ourſelves, and enter into a communion with thoſe that think themſelves called

of God ſo to do, but that we muſt be damnable hereticks and ſchiſmaticks for attempting and perſiſting in it. And that altho' the *Roman* church were indeed become heretical and idolatrous, and whatever we charge upon her doctrine and worſhip, ſtill we muſt be under the guilt of ſchiſm, and ſuffer the conſequences of it. That it is not lawful to make any change of religion † without the Pope and a council. ‡ And ſo they admit that monſtrous canon,----If we ſee the Pope neglecting his own ſalvation and that of his brethren, unprofitable, regardleſs of his work, ſilent of all good; that he hurts his own ſalvation, drawing with him innumerable people to the utmoſt miſery, to be puniſhed with him eternally with many ſtripes---- Yet no man ought to reprove him or chaſtiſe his faults, becauſe he is to judge all the world, unleſs one knows that he err in the faith. ‖---So the general of the *des Lainez*, in his ſuffrage: None can reform the *Roman* church, for the ſervant is not above his Lord. You will ſurely ſee we have a contrary pattern before us in the text, and that the good reformers of the ſixteenth century, and all that follow them, as the apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks to the *Romans*, *walk in the*

† *Boniface*, Biſhop of *Mayence*.
‡ Decret. Grat. Diſt. 40. ‖ F. *Paul*, 721.

ſteps

*ſteps of that faith of our father Abraham.** When the God of glory appear'd to him and convinced him of the ungodlineſs of idolatry, and made himſelf known to him, and called him to go out from that idolatrous communion, he had been brought up in; he obeyed at all adventures, and goes out in the ſtrength of faith, and commits himſelf to the conduct of providence, in firm dependance on God's promiſe, and reſignation to his will.

You will eaſily ſee the ſenſe and ſpirit of my text ſhine in what I ſhall offer to you, and ſtrongly proving the neceſſity, and ſhewing the reaſons of that reformation that we adhere to and maintain. *Now it was not written for his ſake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us alſo, to whom it ſhall be imputed, if we believe on him that raiſed up Jeſus our Lord from the dead.*†

I ſhall endeavour to diſcharge what is aſſigned me, I. in conſidering diſtinctly the reformation that we ſpeak of, and ſhew you what we refer to and mean by it.

II. The reaſons and neceſſity of it; and conclude.

As to the firſt, the reformation:

We don't pretend to ſet up the happy and glorious inſtruments of it as a new eccle-

* Rom. iv. 12. † Rom. iv. 23, 24.

ſiaſtical judicature, and to account for all the incidents, and every ſtep of that wonderful work.

We don't erect a proteſtant ſupremacy and infallibility upon the ruins of the papal, nor undertake to maintain all the doctrines of *Luther* and *Zuinglius*, or *Calvin*, or the churches of *France*, or *England*, or *Scotland*. This would be to build up again what we have deſtroy'd, and to ruin that liberty of examining and proving all things, that we may hold faſt that which is good.

The word REFORMATION looks back to an original rectitude eſtabliſhed by God in the very nature of things, and declar'd and ſettled by the only ſupreme authority of God himſelf, by thoſe whom we are ſure he empowered and qualify'd; and where theſe are contradicted, we may re-reject all pretenders to a divine authority; *To the law and to the teſtimony.*

God has given man his underſtanding to this purpoſe, which has an original liberty and power to obſerve things, and enquire and judge with due care and circumſpection, to diſcern between right and wrong, good and evil, that we might try things which differ, and *approve things that are excellent.* * And whoever would engage

* Phil. i. 9, 10.

our

our ſubmiſſion, muſt do it by *commending themſelves to our conſcience in the ſight of God, by the manifeſtation of the truth.* †

We have a ſure rule in the goſpel of Chriſt, eſtabliſhed by an anathema infinitely dreadful: *But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other goſpel to you, than that we have preached, let him be accurſed. As we ſaid before, ſo ſay I now again, if any preach another goſpel unto you, than that you have received, let him be accurſed.* ‡ 'Tis no new thing in the world for men to break through the divine and ſacred ſettlements of religion, and to pervert the goſpel of Chriſt. There ever were falſe prophets and falſe apoſtles: Satan himſelf is transformed into an angel of light: thoſe who ſat in the chair of *Moſes* had leavened the *Jewiſh* religion, and were to be heard with great caution, notwithſtanding the authority they had received; and when they became enemies to the great reformation that Chriſt had undertaken, they were to be no farther regarded.

REFORMATION itſelf has two eſſential and comprehenſive parts:

1. Detecting and diſclaiming, renouncing and forſaking all falſe authority, and every corruption of the ſure inſtitutions of religion, which we have received from God.

† 2 Cor. iv. 2. ‡ Gal. i. 8, 9.

The

The apoſtle ſtiles goſpel times, *the time of reformation*, διορθώσεως: * importing the end and occaſion of Chriſt's appearing in the world, when things were lapſed into utter diſorder, whereby God was diſhonoured and diſpleaſed; ſad confuſion and lamentable darkneſs, and miſtaken notions of God and religion, ſpread and prevailing in the world, to the diſhonour of God, and corrupting the minds and manners of men, and making their lives flagitious, and ſo deſtroying the hopes of that great ſalvation God had formed men for, and which he intended in all the inſtitutions of religion. Whatever, therefore, oppoſes this great deſign of Chriſt's coming, is to be reſiſted; we muſt depart from it, and proteſt againſt it.

2. The ſecond part of reformation is an actual return to that ſimplicity of ſubjection and obedience, that we owe only to the great author and finiſher of our faith. He came to reform the world, and lead men back to the right ways of God, which he hath impreſſed on the conſcience, and publiſhed by his prophets, and meſſengers, and ambaſſadors to the world. *We were like ſheep going aſtray, but now are returned unto the ſhepherd and biſhop of our ſouls.* † Thieves and robbers had climbed into the

* Heb. ix. 10. † 1 Pet. ii. 25.

ſheepfold,

ſheepfold, to fleece and devour the ſheep, ‡ when their voice, their very ſpeech, their doctrines bewray'd them; we muſt not follow, but flee from them. But when we hear the voice of Chriſt, and he calleth us, and leads us out, and goes before us, we follow him, *for we know his voice*, and are, as we ought to be, aſſured it is he and not another that calls, and leads us.

II. The ſecond thing we are to open to you is, the reaſon and neceſſity of that reformation, which was begun in ſo remarkable and wonderful a manner, in the beginning of the 16th century.---The occaſions and calls for it were many, and extremely preſſing; the liberty of mens underſtanding and conſcience violated in the moſt inſolent and outragious manner; their dictates ſuppreſſed and ſtifled; the true and original ſettlements of religion by God and Chriſt vacated and defeated, and dominion over the faith and conſcienees of men cruelly exercis'd: and the original charters of the children of God were conceal'd, with evident eraſements and falſe gloſſes. The *Roman* pontiff ſet up an empire of darkneſs, and, as a ſtrong man armed, kept the houſe as his own property. Inſtead of the ſubjection and allegiance we owe to God

‡ John x.

and

and Chriſt, and that humble and ſincere obedienee that we are to yield to the goſpel, the papal claims engroſs and top over all: and thoſe that profeſs'd themſelves the creatures of the Pope, ſo far ſlighted the goſpel of our ſalvation, that as we are told by *Zuinglius*, * *John Faber* the vicar of *Conſtance* ſaid, We might have liv'd in peace, if there had been no goſpel: And cardinal *Hoſius*, That the church would ſtand on a firmer foot, *Meliori Talo*, if the goſpel had never been written. But inſtead of this, the biſhop of *Bitonto*, at the opening of the council of *Trent*, with a flaunting oratory, calls upon the woods of *Trent* to eccho it through the world, that all ſhould ſubmit themſelves to that council, which if they do not, it will be juſtly ſaid, The Pope's light is come into the world, and men have loved darkneſs better than light. † This indeed appeared like blaſphemy to ſome that attended, and it was wiſh'd, that, at leaſt, he had not taken the formal words of holy ſcripture, that he might not have ſhewed ſo openly to diſeſteem it. Thoſe who had any knowledge of the court of *Rome*, could not but ſee the ſad occaſion there was for reformation: We have an account from one bred up in the *Roman*

* Op. T. 2. p. 622. † F. *Paul*, 132—3.

bigotry,

bigotry, and even after his account of *Rome* continuing a catholick; by what ſteps he came to know the papal impoſture.* Going to *Rome*, he quickly ſaw there was nothing in what he had been taught to think of the Pope and Cardinals.----He had thought that the Pope had every day news from paradiſe, That he ſent whom he would to heaven or hell, That he was holy, infallible, impeccable in all that he ſaid or did; as he ought to be, if Chriſt had given him ſuch an employ as he pretends.----He had a moſt extended knowledge of all things, a continual application to the ſalvation of all men: and ſo in proportion of the Cardinals, he reverenced them exceedingly at a diſtance.

But ſuch was his diſappointment, that it almoſt diſtracted him. Nothing appeared *in that holy city*, *in that mother* and miſtreſs of all churches, but horrible diſſolution of manners, in court and city, without the leaſt ſigns of the fear of God; but abominations of every kind.----This made him think, how is the world abuſed? Oh that they could ſee this to open their eyes! Is this his holineſs that gives pardons, and indulgences, and canonizes ſaints? are theſe the people that muſt give out laws and rules of religion to the whole world? This

* Moycns ſurs pref.

made him ready to renounce Chriſtianity; till the opportunity of reading a *Latin* teſtament reliev'd him, and gave him conſolation; but made it utterly impoſſible to believe, that the Pope was the univerſal vicar of Chriſt; but made appear that Chriſt was the head of his church, the church his body, the faithful his members. ----Not one word of Pope or Cardinals, or any that belonged to them; but examples and exhortations to humility, godlineſs, chaſtity, charity, renouncing the world and its pomps, its grandeurs, its vanities, its riches and pleaſures, by maſter and diſciples. But all things directly contrary in the Popes and the whole court.

Nothing can be more manifeſt than that the papal pretenſions of ſovereignty muſt deſtroy the liberty of our underſtanding, and divert men from enquiring after the mind and will of God, and ſtudying the mind of Chriſt: for I think I may ſay, in truth, that half ſo much has not been ſaid of our obedience to Chriſt, as has been ſaid for his pretended vicar, and the uſurped power of what they call the church. I ſhall ſet before you claims of the pontiff of *Rome*, as they are drawn up by the excellent Dr. *Barrow*, who has thoroughly examin'd and effectually demoliſhed them, *viz.** That to the Pope, a ſovereign mo-

* Q^to p. 31.

narch

narch by ſanction of the whole church, do appertain royal prerogatives, called *Regalia Petri*, in the oath preſcribed to the biſhops; ſuch as theſe which follow,

To be ſuperior to the whole church, and to its repreſentative in a general ſynod of biſhops. To convocate general ſynods at his pleaſure, all biſhops being obliged to attend on his ſummons. To preſide in ſynods, ſo as to ſuggeſt matter, promote, obſtruct, over-rule all the debates in them. To confirm or invalidate their determinations, giving life to them by his aſſent; or ſubſtracting it by his diſſent. To define points of doctrine, or to decide controverſies authoritatively. To enact, ſuſpend, diſpenſe with eccleſiaſtical laws and canons. To relax or evacuate eccleſiaſtical cenſures, by indulgence and pardon. To void promiſes, oaths, obligations to laws, by his diſpenſations. To be the fountain of all paſtoral juriſdiction and dignity. *And after many others.*

To be himſelf unaccountable for any of his doings, exempt from judgment, and liable to no reproof.----To ſummon and commiſſionate ſoldiers, by croiſade, to fight againſt and deſtroy infidels, *&c.* Now, brethren, is it fit for any men in their ſenſes to own ſuch claims as theſe? Can there be any ſafety or liberty, truth or juſtice, where theſe powers are granted to

any mortal? Did the keys of the kingdom of heaven, given to St. *Peter*, intend any thing ſo boundleſs and abſolute in itſelf, and ſo oppreſſive and enſlaving to the world? Who then would be a Chriſtian? Is the yoke eaſy, *&c.* Theſe powers have ſometimes met with ſome check and contradiction, but of no effect and continuance; and whatever was reſum'd by ſome councils, as that of *Conſtance* and *Baſil*, was loſt again, and in a ſilent, but effectual, way reſum'd by the council of *Trent*, by the clauſe, *Proponentibus Legatis*, and by the referring all things to the Pope's confirmation, and ſalvo to his authority. So that the council of *Trent*, ſo earneſtly deſired by emperors and kings, to ſettle the diſorder'd ſtate of religion, was conducted by the court of *Rome* to defeat all attempts for reformation.* It remain'd therefore, that all that were convinced of the very corrupt ſtate of religion in the *Roman* communion ſhould carry on their proteſtations, and reform themſelves in the beſt manner they could, to advance the honour and obtain the favour of God, and their own peace and edification. Therefore our learned and pious biſhop *Jewel* writes to his friend in *Italy*, Signior *Scipio*; When you ſee that all things are

* F. *Paul*, p. 436. *Vergerius.*

moſt

moſt unjuſtly handled, that nothing is ſincerely and fairly carried in the council, you may not wonder that our men had rather tarry at home, than take ſo long and idle a journey, in which they ſhall both loſe their labour and betray their cauſe.

You will ſay, It is not lawful to make a change in religion without order from the Pope and the general council. Yet the Popes have changed almoſt the whole ſtate of the primitive church, without any council at all.

For, what? While the Pope aſſembleth the council, and the biſhops and abbots return home, will they have God's people in the mean time to be deceiv'd, to err, to miſtake themſelves, to be overwhelm'd with errors, and want the knowledge of God, and to be carried to everlaſting deſtruction?

Is it not lawful for any of us to believe in Chriſt, to profeſs the goſpel, to ſerve God aright, to fly ſuperſtition and idolatry, except they will give us leave?

The ſtate of God's children were moſt miſerable, if, there being ſo many errors and ſo generally ſpread, and ſo groſs, ſo blind, ſo foul, ſo perſpicuous, and manifeſt, that even our adverſaries themſelves are not able to deny them, nothing could be done without the whole world could meet in a general council.

Thus

Thus he reaſonably expoſtulates, and makes it evident, that corruptions in religion muſt not be ſuffer'd to go on without obſervation and detection, without oppoſition and reformation: That we may reform ourſelves in *England*, and that every country, city, or church may do ſo, without getting a licence from the Pope and a council. Muſt the word and commands of God, which we are ſure are his, and the goſpel of Chriſt ſtay for letters of commendation from them?

Muſt we ask leave of any mortal man to open our eyes, to uſe our underſtanding, to ſeek God and worſhip him, as our conſcience directs and he commands? Muſt we, who were baptized into the obſervance of all that Chriſt commanded, neglect to read his goſpel, and inſtead of the commandments of Chriſt obſerve the arbitrary commands of a man, that will call himſelf the head and the maſter of the church. Theſe demands are impious and ſhocking to thoſe that read the teſtament, and believe the ſufficiency and faithfulneſs of the apoſtles of Chriſt in delivering to us all things they had received of him, and declaring to us the whole counſel of God.

The means of acquiring the methods of uſing their beloved prerogatives, and the miſchiefs they have cauſed in the world, gave

gave the loudeſt call to thinking and ſober men to diſown and condemn them. From the beginning it was not ſo; nor is it pretended to be the original ſtate of Chriſtianity. Wicked and worldly men, getting into office in the church, purſued the gratification of their luſt of power, and pomp and riches, abuſed the reſpect that was ſhown to them for the ſake of Chriſt and his goſpel by people of ſimplicity, and by emperors that were converted to the Chriſtian faith. All the changes in the empire were watched for opportunities to aggrandize their power; till at laſt *Boniface* III. by wicked compliances with a murderer and uſurper, *Phocas*, got the title of *head of the church* and *univerſal biſhop*; and then their power increaſed prodigiouſly, and his ſucceſſors always took the advantage of the weakneſs of the *Greek* emperors and the diſorders in *Italy*, to encreaſe their authority by policy and violence; and to declare war againſt emperors, to whom before they had been ſubject.* So that the emperor *Babaroſſa* in 1150. writes to the princes of *Germany*, That the Popes being enriched by the emperor, now undertake to dethrone kings, and princes, and will have none equal with themſelves: That they aſpire to divinity

* Richer. hiſt. concil. gener. *Aventin*, hiſt. Bo.

itſelf,

itſelf, and that they would be no leſs feared and adored than God himſelf, nay even more; and that the Chriſtian religion hath no greater enemies than they.

Their authority has been uſed to raiſe the moſt bloody wars, and by the curſed projects of *Croiſado*'s to engage Chriſtian princes and people to weaken themſelves and harraſs and deſtroy one another, that they might be a prey to the Popes, and incapable of defending their own privileges and the immunities of their country. Their bloody cruelties executed by theſe have been juſtly preſented, to your horror and amazement; and yet half has not been told you.

Another uſe of their uſurped authority will lead me directly to the neceſſity of the reformation; *that* was, the moſt ſcandalous means of raiſing money by indulgences; which, as you have heard, was the chief deſign of the invention of purgatory; before which no body troubled their heads about indulgences, as *Fiſher* biſhop of *Rocheſter* declares in his book againſt *Luther*, Artic. 13.

This was the awakening impoſition that made all men feel the cruel bondage; this detected the greedineſs of filthy lucre, that utterly deſtroyed the moſt canonical pretences of the biſhop of *Rome*.

Pope *Leo* X. who, as Father *Paul* ſets him forth, had a noble birth and education, good parts, ſingular learning, in humanity, goodneſs, and a ſweet manner in treating affairs,----a great inclination to favour thoſe that were learned ;----- would have been a Pope abſolutely complete, if with theſe he had join'd ſome knowledge in things that concern religion, and ſome more propenſion to piety ; of both which he ſeemed careleſs.

When money muſt be had, by the advice of *Lorenzo Pucci*, one of his Cardinals, he ſends out a plenary indulgence --- as *Urban* II. had done, to ſet on foot the holy war---and after, the ſame indulgences were given for taking arms againſt them, that would not obey the church ; and infinite exactions were made under thoſe pretences. --Now all that would give money might have full pardons, even for thoſe that were dead, that they ſhould be freed from purgatory. *Thuanus* ſays, that he ſent his bulls throughout Chriſtendom to raiſe money for his immenſe expences, promiſing the expiation of all ſins, and eternal life, at a ſet price and rate, according to the nature of the crimes ; and he appointed a treaſury, and queſtors, and preachers to ſet forth the value and efficacy of theſe indulgences.

Then roſe *Luther*, a Monk, who refuted and expoſed the diſcourſes of the preachers, queſtions the Pope's power to give indulgences, and proceeds to examine the doctrines of Popery, and finds them corrupted and deprav'd, and publiſhes ninety-five theſes: and thus the dawn of the reformation appear'd, after a long and dark night, and nothing was able to ſtop the progreſs of it. Many others ariſe with an unfeigned zeal for truth, and are by no means either to be bribed or deterred, till they had laid open the reigning corruption and abuſes, and brought back Chriſtians to the pure word of God, and the holy inſtitutions of Jeſus Chriſt. In all this the hand of God appeared, and the true ſpring of the neceſſity was from him; he ſpake and it was done, he commanded and it ſtood faſt. He ſaid, let there be light, and there was light. 'Twas the call of God to come out from the communion, whoſe errors and impieties have been prov'd to you. The neceſſity I am conſidering, to which all the foregoing diſcourſe refers, operated mightily upon the choſen veſſels of the reformation, whoſe language was as the apoſtles, *We cannot but ſpeak the things which we have ſeen and heard.** The word of God was in their

* Acts iv. 20.

heart

heart as a burning fire ſhut up in their bones, as *Jeremiah* ſpeaks, *I was weary with forbearing, I could not ſtay.* There was a neceſſity impreſs'd on their mind; and this will not be difficult to make evident, nor appear ridiculous to ſober minds, when a *Cicero* could ſay, ---*Nemo ſine afflatu divino verè magnus.* There was a magnanimity in the firſt reformers, that muſt always perpetuate their memories to the glory of God; and we ſhould hope and pray, that the reſidue of that ſpirit may revive that work, and make a reformation flouriſh again.

I muſt own that when we ſpeak of neceſſity in common diſcourſe, we mean many times the connection of certain things or actions, with ends propoſed and intended, either to eſcape evil or attain good; we alſo by it expreſs natural and ſtrong inclinations prevailing againſt ſome weaker biaſs and propenſion; or we mean ſomewhat that is fit and proper to the apprehenſion and judgment of our minds-- All theſe conſtitute a compleat neceſſity. So that we do not mean a thing that could not poſſibly not be, or be otherwiſe than it is; 'tis ſo different in our caſe, that it is a wonder and ſurpriſe, that ſuch an event ſhould appear in the world: that when the world lieth in wickedneſs, and all

men ſhun danger, ſhift off labour, and love their eaſe, that any ſhould concern themſelves in ſuch an affair. *When a ſtrong man arm'd keeps his palace, his goods are in peace*;* and who would care to attack and provoke him? What is every one's concern is no body's buſineſs. A neceſſity in the caſe is moſt evident. Could men undertake ſuch a work without preſſing motives? The difficulties and dangers, the adverſaries and enemies make it ſure, that whatever was the ſpring, the neceſſity was inevitable. We eſtimate the ſtrength of any ſpring by the weight it moves, and every weight by its counterpoiſe. Look therefore how few, how mean, how deſpiſed, the firſt actors in this cauſe were. *Matheo Langi*, as Father *Paul* tells us, p. 55. It is not to be omitted, ſays he, that Cardinal *Matheo Langi*, archbiſhop of *Saltzburg*, told every one, that the reformation of the maſs was honeſt, the liberty of meats convenient, and the demand juſt to be disburthened of ſo many commandments of men: but that a poor *Monk ſhould reform all, was not to be endur'd.* When the long arms of the Pope, the emperor's jealouſy of his power, the prejudices of an old religion, ſtood in their way, what could keep up their courage or

* Luke xi. 22.

engage

engage them to move a ſtep? how could *Luther* venture into *Wormes*, where he had ſo many enemies? They knew that bonds and afflictions attended them. They knew what were the threatnings of their enemies; *The kings of the earth ſtood up, and the rulers were gathered together againſt them.** How many mercenary pens and vile tongues employ'd to calumniate them? how many wheedling and cajoling offers, the mitres and the purple to allure them? One exhorts the Pope to convince them with chains and fire; all princes applied to to withdraw their protection. The Cardinal *Volterra*, who had diſcouraged *Adrian* VI. from his attempts for reformation as an endleſs work, tells him, hereſies were not to be extinguiſhed by reformation, but *Cruſadoes*; by exciting princes and people to root them out; that *Innocent* III. did happily thus oppreſs the *Albigenſes* of *Languedoc*, and other Popes the *Waldenſes*, *Picards*, and *poor men* of *Lions*: that there would not be wanting in *Germany* many princes, who in caſe the Pope would give them leave to ſeize themſelves of the ſtates of *Luther*'s favourers, would greedily embrace the condition: and that he might cauſe many people to follow them, by granting indulgences and par-

* Acts iv. 26.

dons,

dons, to whoſoever would aſſiſt them. You ſee what threatned them. They went on with the work, tho' Pope *Adrian* VI. had the conſcience and humanity to complain, that the condition of Popes was miſerable, ſeeing it was plain, that they could do no good, tho' they deſired and endeavoured to do it; and that it was not poſſible to effect any one point of reformation. Theſe accounts taken out of the diary of the biſhop of *Fabiano*, by Father *Paul*, p. 24.

The neceſſities and perſecutions, the wars, the aſſaults and plundering they were expoſed to, the routs and ruins that they ſuſtain'd, demonſtrated a mighty neceſſity that carry'd them on in their work: that, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, *a neceſſity is laid on me.* They knew the fate of thoſe that had ſuffer'd in the ſame cauſe; the cruel death of *John Huſs* and *Jerom* of *Prague*, the bloody wars of *Bohemia*, the ſufferings that attended even their glorious ſucceſſes under *Ziſca*, and the miſery at laſt brought on them by the perfidiouſneſs of ſome among themſelves. Theſe things could not be unthought of, but they were counterbalanc'd, as in our text, *by faith, and a divine call.* It could by no means ſatisfy their conſcience to be told, that * *Luther* ought

* F. *Paul*, p. 28.

not

not to be excus'd by the ſcandals and grievances of the church of *Rome* ;---for in caſe they were true, yet ought they not to forſake the Catholick unity, but rather ſupport what was amiſs with all patience. It was a brave anſwer of *Luther* to an emperor, demanding his revocation, That he could not revoke any thing he had written or taught, if he were not convinced by the ſcriptures, or evident reaſon. He would indeed ſubmit to a future council, if ſentence were to be given on the articles drawn out of his book, according to the ſcriptures. And when he was ask'd, What remedy ought to be us'd to compoſe the troubles? He anſwered, Thoſe only propoſed by *Gamaliel* to the *Jews*, That if the enterprize were of man it would vaniſh, but if it came from God it was impoſſible to hinder it. And that might give ſatisfaction to the Pope ; becauſe all men ought to reſt ſecure, as he, *Luther*, did, that if his deſign came not from God, it would periſh in a ſhort time. You ſee here, that a neceſſity was prevailing againſt all the common fears and hopes of men.----The zeal of God's houſe, as *Luther* declared, had animated and ſupported him ; and when he own'd his books, he boldly declares, It was too manifeſt that all the countries of Chriſtendom were oppreſs'd, and groaned under the

the bondage; and that to retract, would be to confirm the tyranny. He turned himself to the emperor and princes, saying, It was a blessing of God when the true doctrine came to be made manifest, and to reject it was to draw on us extreme calamities.

The elector *Palatine* was then obliged to interpose; or he had been then deliver'd up, had not that prince protested, That he would never draw on *Germany* the infamy of not keeping the publick faith to serve priests.

We have own'd the hand of God, we have prov'd the strong sensations of their own hearts in the reformers. We are now to consider, *thirdly*, the several things that constitute this necessity, and cause these inclinations for reformation from Popery: 'Tis lamentable that so few minds are rightly dispos'd for this, and that, from various causes, multitudes are unmoveable in this concern. Persons dead to wisdom, virtue, and religion, that have no thought or reflection, that love and sit in darkness, we leave out of the case; for when we speak of reason and necessity, we suppose that men use their sense and reason; that this necessity is the poise and spring that moves intelligent agents. Reason and interest, or self-preservation and defence, religion

ligion and conſcience towards God, which obligeth to benevolence towards all men, are the conſtituents of this neceſſity.

1. There are ſome things abhorrent to nature. Innocent and uncorrupted nature has ſome ſtrong antipathies, that ariſe to an indignation that cannot bear ſome objects. Falſhood and forgery, tyranny and oppreſſion, injuſtice and cruelty, hypocritical pretences to religion, only to accompliſh ſecular and worldly purpoſes; ſuch appearances indeed were ſufficient to induce us to what I have defin'd the Reformation to be. Jugglers and impoſtors had made a prey of unwary ſouls, abus'd their ignorance and credulity, made them the tools of their wicked purpoſes to their own ruin, their ingratitude to emperors that had enriched and raiſed them, perverting noble inſtitutions from their proper deſigns and uſe; the mercileſs authors of general calamities and great miſchiefs. More than *Trent* anathemas are denounced againſt ſuch as theſe.

The mind of man is ſuſceptive of noble paſſions and affections; no tyrants could be ſecure where honour and conſcience reign in the hearts of men. They would ſerve them as the *Romans* did the memory of *Paul* IV. before he was well dead, all was tumult in *Rome* from the great hatred the people had conceived againſt him. The heads of

the Pope's ſtatues were beaten off and drawn through the ſtreets; the inquiſition he had been ſo fond of burnt, and the priſoners releaſed, and all the moveable arms and monuments of the houſe of *Caraffa* torn in peices. So that you ſee there are ſuch circumſtances of things here, that if men hold their peace the ſtones of the ſtreet cry out.

2. A neceſſity of intereſt, ſelf-preſervation and defence. The claims of the papacy are ſufficiently evident, that they oppreſs our liberties, challenge all our properties, bring us under the laſh of moſt terrible cenſures, and that direful excommunication, that through the ignorance and bigotry of the people hath been the diſgrace and ruin of many illuſtrious princes and their dominions. *Sixtus Quintus*, who had been, as ſome tell us, originally a hog-driver, and roſe to the Popedom to feed the ſheep of Chriſt, had the inſolence to excommunicate *Henry* IV. of *France*,* and to declare him incapable of ſucceeding to the crown; proudly boaſting, that he being in the high ſtation and in the full power that the King of Kings and Lord of Lords had given him, he declared him and others hereticks, and every body knows the conſequences of that. They can tell

* Moyens ſurs & honêtes pour la converſ. des heretiques. Mez. life of *H.* IV. p. 367.

kings

kings with a moſt haughty air, that if they touch their power or take from them their obedience, they will take from them their kingdom and the communion of Chriſtendom; that their pen, ink, and paper, that is, their bulls, are not inferior to thoſe of kings, to their arrets and acts of Parliament.

The pride and power of the *Roman* pontiff has been abated by the bleſſed reformation, but they ſtill have the ſame inclinations to tyranny, and only want opportunity to act over again the ſame pride and violence by which ſo many have been made miſerable.

3. The main ſpring and force of this is conſcience; the ſenſe of our duty to God. This appear'd in all the ſteps of the reformation, and nothing elſe could have engaged the reformers to diſturb the courſe of error and the reign of Popery at ſo great a hazard, and with ſo unequal forces. But *conſcience is a heavy weight, grave pondus*; the call of God an awful ſound, and the firm perſuaſion of this an all-ſufficient ſupport. Faith will bear us up and carry us on.

Whatever peace and emolument we might have ſecured by ſilence and ſubmiſſion to long continued uſurpations, the call of God would have diſturbed all our tranquillity. Whatever they that im-

pudently call themſelves the church, and the only catholick church, the only true miniſtry and paſtors, may with noiſe and confidence challenge, we ſee clearly their impoſtures and corruptions, their ſuperſtition and idolatry, their antichriſtian doctrines and oppoſition to the truths of the goſpel; and are ſure that God calls us and all perſons to whom his word comes, to ſeparate and come out from among them. The record of this call and command to *Abraham*, with the commendation of his faith ſet before us as an example to us, become a real call to us, as if the God of glory that appear'd to him had appeared to us. Chriſt and his apoſtles by preaching and delivering the goſpel truth, and by warning us of falſe apoſtles and deceitful workers, call all men every where to adhere to the truth as it is in Jeſus.

The miniſtry that they inſtituted we are bound to ſet up:* the aſſemblies of Chriſtians which they commanded we are bound

* *Claude* Hiſt. Def. of the Reformat. part 4. p. 97. It ſeems to me, ſays a great defender of the reformation, that the firm opinion of the abſolute neceſſity of epiſcopacy, that goes ſo high as to own no church, or call, or miniſtry, or ſacraments or ſalvation in the world, where there are no epiſcopal ordinations, altho' there ſhould be the true faith, the true doctrine and piety there, and which would that all religion ſhould depend on a formality which *he thought* he had ſhown to be a human inſtitution. ---I cannot, ſays he, avoid having at leaſt a contempt of thoſe kind of thoughts, and a compaſſion for thoſe who fill their heads with them.

to

to frequent: the ſacraments they inſtituted we are bound to obſerve: and we are ſure, that where two or three are met together in the name of Chriſt, he will be with them; they have his authority, and ſhall have his bleſſing. Now ſhould we neglect his call, or corrupt his inſtitutions, we tremble at the anathema that would then indeed belong to us. ----God ſpeaks, as he did to *Pharaoh* by *Moſes* and *Aaron*, Let my people go: and Proteſtants ſay, as they, Let us ſacrifice unto the Lord our God, leſt he fall upon us.---We know that if we deny Chriſt before men, he will deny us before his father. Conſcience obliges us to be concern'd for the honour of God; his name is concern'd, and his good ways are blaſphemed, the religion of the bleſſed Jeſus miſrepreſented and made contemptible to infidels, who form their notions of it from the principles and practices, and the ſuperſtitious ceremonies of the *Roman* church. Zeal therefore for the honour of our Redeemer excites us.

The dangerous deluſions of a multitude of poor ſouls move our compaſſion, and we cannot but think our ſeparation from the *Roman* communion neceſſary, to hold out a light of warning and direction to them. 'Tis conſcience therefore of our duty to God and man, and that fidelity that we owe to

Jeſus

Jeſus Chriſt our only Lord, that bind this neceſſity upon us.

This engages us, who are called to miniſter in the goſpel, to call upon you and warn you of your danger, and ſtir you up to your duty to watch againſt the attempts of thoſe that lie in wait to deceive you. Maintain your ſeparation from the corruptions and abominations of Popery. Who would not fly from *Sodom*, tho' it were but to *Zoar?* Who would look back, that was once warn'd of the judgments that muſt ſooner or later be poured down on *Babylon?** There is a voice from heaven, the whole word of God ſpeaks this to us, a neceſſity is upon you, and woe to you if you believe not or obey not the call of God; Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partaker of her ſins, and that ye receive not of her plagues --- for ſtrong is the Lord God, who judgeth her. Should we not then go out, ſhould we ever think of returning? Who would not leave *Jeruſalem* itſelf, as the firſt Chriſtians did, when they are warned of God? for even the temple of God itſelf can be no ſecurity to thoſe that had crucified the ſon of God, and refuſed to have him reign over them; much leſs can the pretended vicar of Chriſt protect thoſe by his indulgences, abſolutions

* Rev. xviii. 4, 8.

and

and pardons, who join themſelves to the corrupters of the goſpel of Chriſt.

Therefore let us continue Proteſtants indeed, and we ſhall not in the end repent of any labours, hazards or expences, that it may coſt us. Let us adhere to our bible; let us be humble and cautious, look to God by daily fervent prayer, that he that has called us to go out of *Babylon*, would conduct us to the end.

Let us be humble and cautious, not too ſevere upon imperfect, differing or erring Proteſtants: let us keep our own conſcience void of offence, and leave others to their great maſter. Let us not ſeek the praiſe of men, or be diſcouraged at their cenſures. Judge nothing before its time, but wait for that time, when every one ſhall receive their praiſe of God.

We rejoice in the reformation of *Germany*, *Swiſſerland*, *Geneva*, *France* (as it once was, oh that it were ſuch now) and the churches of *England* and *Scotland!* but our reformation muſt be according to our light, from the word of God and the dictates of a ſincerely enquiring conſcience; we muſt ſo worſhip God as we think will be moſt acceptable to him, and leave others ſo to do, without uncharitable cenſures or any ſeparation; but what we are forced to by unlawful terms of communion inſiſted on, and impoſed on us.

us. To this we have a call of God, and let us commit ourſelves to him, and obey it faithfully, and his promiſes will be made good to the full: ſo I ſhall conclude, as this lecture began; Let us maintain a becoming *jealouſy*, *leſt*, *as the ſerpent beguiled* Eve *through his ſubtilty*, *our minds ſhould be corrupted from the ſimplicity that is in* Chriſt Jeſus.

F I N I S.

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